



John F. M. Dovaston,
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John R. M. D. M. D.

Vol. 2.

THE
SAUNTERER,

—◆—
VOLUME II.

THE

SAUNTER

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THE
SAUNTERER,
A
PERIODICAL PAPER,
IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY HEWSON CLARKE,
OF EMANUEL COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

—◆—
SECOND EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS,
And a Sketch of the Author's Life.

—◆—
Mores et Studia dicam.

Haud facile emergunt quorum virtutibus obstat
Res angusta,

VOLUME II.

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TO
THE MASTER,
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FELLOWS OF
EMANUEL COLLEGE,
CAMBRIDGE,
THIS SECOND VOLUME
OF THE
SAUNTERER,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THEIR

OBLIGED HUMBLE SERVANT,

HEWSON CLARKE.

June, 1806.

THE

W. H. W.

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THE
SAUNTERER,
&c.

No. 30.

Men some to business some to pleasure take,
But every woman is at heart a rake.

Prodiga non sentit pereuntem fœmina censum.

Juv.

BELPHEGOR, A TALE, *continued.*

THE quack complied; the league was made,
A plot between the two was laid,
That soon as Bel could safely stir,
To his old game he should recur,
Make on some wealthy dame impression,
And stubbornly maintain possession,

VOL. II.

B

Spite of perfumes and drugs and prayer,
Until this doctor should appear ;
But when the settled cash was ready,
A whisper should relieve my lady.
Long time, lest some officious eye
Th' absconding demon might descry,
Contemplative of future ills,
Behind a magazine of pills
Snug lay Sir Bel—defied the search,
And left his bailiffs in the lurch.

Now freed, among the higher ranks
The grateful fiend began his pranks :
And first a wealthy countess enter'd ;
No friend, not e'en her husband ventur'd
With such a rival to contend,
Or share possession with a fiend ;
But quick they to the college hied ;
The power of med'cine must be tried ;
These sages never act alone ;
Without a council nothing's done ;
So till, the best in all the city,
Impell'd by hope of fee and pity
Of dame possest, together met,
And on Sir Bel debating sat.

Then was the patient blister'd sore
Veins breath'd that never breath'd before,
And copious draughts of hellebore;
(Besides each well-approved device
Used by Monro in cases nice)
Were given, in vain, for this disease:
The doctors bowed and took their fees.
Charms and dark spells were now applied,
And exorcising rites were tried :
No jot the stedfast devil stirr'd,
Observant of his plighted word.

Fame seized her trump, and loudly blew :
All Europe soon the story knew ;
How Satan had quite pos'd the college,
And baffled every conj'rors knowledge,
The doctor grinding *Dale-Mercurius*,
Heard of this madness strange and furious:
He seiz'd his cane, laid by his mortar,
Whence it arose he guess'd the quarter ;
Took coach, arrived and made his proffers ;
The earl accepting, op'd his coffers.
Fixt on the fee, and left the demon
And quack to fight it out between them.
Sore fear'd the doctor, lest the fiend
Should now forget his former friend ;
But alongside my lady he crept,
“ Good Sir, you recollect our secret ? ”

At once the punctual fiend obey'd ;
The dame was cur'd, the doctor paid,
Now safely to his shop return'd.
Greedy for more such fees he burn'd :
On drugs he plac'd no more reliance,
Puff'd with the thoughts of this alliance ;
But deem'd each hour an age, before
He heard again of Belphegor.
Now flies the fiend to Delhi's plain,
And enters the imperial brain ;
Again all med'cines were applied ;
The Bramins here their science tried.
In vain the court with hopes they fed ;
In vain they purg'd, in vain they bled ;
Their drugs were weak, their art was dull ;
Sir Bel stuck close to his Mogul ;
Nor budg'd, till call'd by common fame
The doctor's self to Delhi came.
Ah ! who can count each crone and lack
Demanded by th' insatiate quack ?
Suffice it, that of such a sum,
(No matter whether just a plum)
For his reward, the Treasury they rob
As might have satisfied a Nabob.
In mute suspence the Lords attend :
Then thus Sir Bel—" I think, my friend,

“ Thus far you’ve made a decent bargain,

“ And pocketed a pretty fair gain.

“ But now observe : I leave this prey,

“ And once more your commands obey;

“ Secure your gold, and haste away.

“ If e’er again you dare come near,

“ Or with my frolics interfere,

“ You die as sure as I’m from hell :—

“ Iv’e kept my word ; and so—Farewell !”

He ceas’d ; and quiet left his Highness :

The quack (not sorry for his shyness

That this ’twixt him and Satan made,

And quite content to quit the trade),

Of each kind Omrah shakes the hand,

And takes his passage over land.

No cross mischance his journey marks ;

At Scanderoon he soon embarks ;

And push’d along by favouring gales,

For Venice spreads his crowded sails.

But here began the doctor’s care ;

Chac’d, hail’d and ta’en by a corsair ;

Doom’d as a slave to daily toil,

And plunder’d of his Indian spoil,

Sore griev’d he, captive at Algiers,

And curs’d Sir Bel and all his peers.

Now so it happ’d, that wicked sprite

(In teasing dames who took delight)

E'en at that time had made his prey
The chief Sultana of the Dey :
And all Algiers was in a riot
To calm her grief and keep her quiet.
But soon the doctor's art was known :
For rumour e'en from Delhi's throne
By sea and land his steps had trac'd,
And all his late atchievements blaz'd?
Process at Algiers is but short,
They seize the doctor, bring to court,
And straight command him, on his life,
To cure the gracious sovereign's wife.
What could be done? Should he refuse,
The mutes present the ready noose ;
And should he tempt the wearied fiend,
He fear'd at least as bad an end.
But the nice matter weighing well,
He thought it best to trust Sir Bel ;
For mutes will often have their way,
Before they hear what you've to say ;
And Bel had never yet been tried,
How far he might be mollified.
So to the Dey the trembling quack,
In private, told what he should lack ;
And labour'd to contrive a spell,
To save himself, and trick Sir Bel.

The time arriv'd : the moody queen
High on an ample stage was seen :
Just by, in state, appear'd the Dey,
With mutes and guards in just array ;
And all Algiers the place surrounded,
To see the cunning imp dumbfounded.
The quack, not eager to engage,
Was something loath to mount the stage,
And trembl'd, for his heart misgave him,
His deep laid scheme might fail to save him.
Then, close beside the dame possess'd,
In whispers he the fiend address'd,
And his quandary represented—
How by the corsair circumvented,
No choice was left him, but to lose
His life by Bel or by the noose ;
And urg'd full many a moving plea
To soothe the fiend to clemency :
In vain he wept, in vain he pray'd ;
The sullen devil shook his head :
In such a case 'twas never heard
That any Devil broke his word :
And such a noun as *clemency*
Was not in Hell's vocab'lary.
Now Bel prepar'd the *coup de grace* ;
Death star'd the doctor in the face ;

When (as the Dey had given command,
If e'er the quack should wave his hand)
A furious knocking shook the gate,
Behind the royal chair of state ;
And shrill-pip'd foot boys bawl'd aloud,
Room for the coach there! through the crowd :
The mob fall back—they squeeze, they stare,
The horses kick, the lacquies swear,
Nor e'er had Algiers known before
Such ton, such splendour, such uproar.
Cries Bel, " How prodigal the age is
" In servants, trappings, equipages,
" And liv'ries, gold and silver clinquant—
" My heart misgives me when I think on't,
" Zounds ! what a tumult—I much wonder
" Who 'tis that makes the racket yonder.
" Here quack—canst tell me whence yon noise is,
" Yon hateful jar of women's voices?
" Don't trifle with me on your life."
The Doctor grinn'd, " Sir, 'tis your wife—
" Your wife, who searching far and near
" To clasp again her *only dear*."
Up rose the liberated queen :
For Bel had left her sound and clean ;
Heard nought the doctor had to say,
But slunk invisible away ;

Forgot to kill the queen or quack,
Thinking his wife was at his back,
Nor stay'd his flight, nor dropp'd his fears,
'Till seas lay 'twixt him and Algiers.

But whither went this busy fiend,
In mere surmise our search must end :
Perhaps, where'er he chuse to dwell,
The place will shew some traits of hell ;
His fost'ring influence there will nourish
The deadly sins, and make them flourish ;
Where'er Sir Bel has ta'en his stand,
Murder and fraud will mark that land ;
Hypocrisy, with double tongue ;
Courage, from ghastly famine sprung ;
Corruption, that proclaims its price ;
Envy, and griping avarice ;
Ambition, that for plunder gapes ;
And cruelty in all her shapes,
Will rule the realm wherever lurks
This patron of satanic works.
But as we know no guilty soil,
Which all these deadly sins defile,
'Tis vain to puzzle where he tarries ;
But certainly it is *not* at Paris.*

X.

* The place of the damn'd is at Paris or Rome,
How happy for us that it is not at home.

SWIFT.

No. 31.

“ Quis homo hic est? quo patre natus.”

“ Who is the man? from what father is he descended?”

THE late season has been so kindly to the vegetation of imperial titles that I, for one, begin to give much more credit than I used to do to those essays on the marvellous which pass under the name of books of Chivalry. “ A Knight Errant is one whom to-day you shall see well curried and bastinadoed, and to-morrow he shall forthwith become an Emperor.” So sudden a transformation did formerly appear very unaccountable to all sober people; but we now see this definition reduced into practice, and the wonder ceases: a man is well curried, bastinadoed, and bullied, and robbed to-day; and to-morrow he, *ex mero motu*, no one knows why or wherefore, puts on a new suit of titles with as much ease, and full as becomingly, as many people quarter on their arms what they have no sort of right to by the laws of Heraldry, or as

others throw in a few surnames, *ad libitum*, to give weight to their own simple addition.

In a company where I was the other day, the conversation ran upon the late changes in the imperial world. My neighbour Thorn, who is Lord of the Manor of Morland, declared that at his next court leet, the steward should make out a patent, investing him and his heirs for ever with the title of Emperor of Morland, and Grand Duke of all the farms which in the aggregate compose his estate: and we all agreed that our government would be highly remiss in their attention to the politics of the continent, if they did not speedily declare the dignity of a Poor Knight of Kew, hereditary in the family of all those veterans who are now merely elective titularies under the style of Poor Knights of Windsor: The long habits of friendship existing between these kingdoms and the ci-devant Emperor of Germany, and the many pecuniary obligations we have received from the quarter, calling loudly on us for some such acknowledgement of the propriety of his late self-exaltation.

When I came to reflect on the subject of our discourse, I could not help feeling the littleness of man. Fortune has not done enough for us when she has invested us with power and wealth;

it is not a sufficient opiate to a person of an ambitious mind, that he has destroyed all his enemies, subverted the liberties of a nation, rendered himself an object of hatred to one half of mankind, and of terror to the other half: No; he must be addressed by a particular appellation, and must couch the warrants or mandates by which his will is made known to the petty sovereigns on whom he smiles and tramples at the same time, in a phraseology which is to distinguish him from all the species except six or eight, and which, instead of adding to the security or strength of his dominion, must raise up a terrible enemy to assail him, by planting envy in the breasts of thousands. This hankering after the splendour of title seems to be one of those weaknesses which is inherent in our nature, and is always a twin brother with ambition. Providence not unfrequently furnishes an antidote in the very place where its wisdom permits the existence of a poison; and I consider this glaring weakness, which is often, if not always, so predominant in the hearts of our greatest conquerors, to be implanted by the special bounty of heaven in order to counteract the shining qualities which might, without such an alloy, tend to the too

great misery of the human race. That it is an infatuation, appears clearly from this : that it is not only inconsistent with the general character of generals and statesmen, who look to the solid advantages of a campaign or treaty before they consider the length of their soldier's queues, or the fancy of their ambassador's service, of plate ; but has proved to be ten times more dangerous to all who have attempted to carry it into execution, than any bold infraction of legal rights, or any rapacious plunder of those whom they had previously reduced into the condition of subjects : for a man will suffer his own heart to whisper that he is the creature of another person, but he will not suffer that other person to tell him so ; and, in like manner as a nobleman who consults his own ease, will always treat his led captains with exterior respect, and say, " Will you be so good as touch the bell ? " instead of saying, " Captain, you know you are a dependent wretch, and are obliged to me for every crumb you eat, so ring the bell or I will kick you out ! " So a skilful usurper will never, by manifesto or otherwise, inform his quondam fellow citizens that they are become his slaves ; but leave them to find it out, as in good time no doubt they will. Whenever the contrary hap-

pens, the vain-glorious tyrant either pays for his title with his life, as was Cæsar's case, or has more trouble in defending that gaudy feather than he had in purchasing the solid power which led him to the assumption of it. The whole tenor of precedents which might be adduced to illustrate this proposition, is lost on succeeding usurpers: the same passions which hurried those before them to the indulgence of the fatal vanity of their hearts, operates on these likewise, and, blinding their judgements to the obvious consequences of such an often attempted and often failing measure, they give way to the impulse which heaven contrives for the means of punishing them, and lose the substance for the shadow.

Observations of this sort apply to one of the newly promulgated Emperors, but by no means to the other: if we think it at all worth while to *reason* on his case, we must, I fear, refer to other precedents than Cromwell, Cæsar, and the long list of powerful and great usurpers; we must have recourse to Emperor Peter, or that other august personage whose grave and dignified deportment is also dwelt upon in the Tale of a Tub; but who, though he graciously gives you his hand to kiss, is, in fact, a mere

taylor, run mad with pride. Here we have the echo of grandeur without the original voice; the diadem without the head: it is a subject too humiliating to be pleasing, and I will hasten to consider that sort of title which has an intrinsic value, and which we cannot be too eager (under certain circumstances) to attain. What I allude to is that addition to a man's private family name, which is dispensed by the prerogative of the crown to deserving persons as a reward for special services, and which transmits distinction to their descendants. The same avidity which still greater persons manifest, to assume the regal or imperial title, displays itself among their inferiors relative to the acquisition of these subordinate titles, but with far better reason. I have no hesitation in asserting positively, that a man's title may be said to be worth money according to its rank; precisely as his land is worth money in proportion to its quantity and quality: and if I be right in my opinion, it is not less rational in one man to volunteer one species of servitude in pursuit of this nominal decoration, than it is in another to venture his life daily in hopes of pay and prize-money. I have so great a respect for the members of the legislature, that I shall not

even hazard an observation on the value of those titles which, among other benefits, confer on the party possessing them a seat in the upper house; more especially because it is obvious that what I lay down on the advantages enjoyed by the *Dii Minores*, will apply still more strongly to the *Cælicolæ* of whom I say nothing. Of the noble order of Baronets; bearing as the emblem of their deeds of arms a bloody hand, I wish I had more room to expatiate than the scanty limits of this paper afford me: they are a race of beings deservedly looked up to, and in proportion as people are wise, so is their veneration for this order of minor mandarins: whence it happens that young ladies, who are generally observed to be the wisest class of our species, are the most intense admirers of Baronets. If it were possible to obtain the honour of the baronetage in any other profession than that of war; if Clergymen, Lawyers, Merchants, Stock-jobbers, Underwriters, &c. &c. were not quite shut out from all hopes of so honourable a distinction; and again, if *interest* or *money* had ever been known to annex the bloody hand to coat armour not otherwise ennobled, I would say that a father of a family could not lay out his property more

advantageously to his children of both sexes, than by purchasing the simple addition of *Sir*, and the gay tack of *Bart.* to his subscription. As far as concerns the daughters, their fortunes are made thus: being entitled to *place*, they are sure to be taken notice of at all country balls; and as it is no small feather among the beaux to lead off near the top of a dance, the honour of dancing with a Baronet's daughter is so coveted as to render particular devotion to nymphs so enviously distinguished a matter of necessity: and hence follows intimacy, rivalry, and choice of connexion on the part of the lady. The fortune of the son is made exactly on the same principle. I knew a worthy Baronet who had just income enough to live in the great world, without saving treasures for his family: he died, and what he had became nothing when spread into so large a channel as a jointure and younger children's fortunes made necessary: his eldest son, garnishing a bad understanding, bad manners, and bad person with the *bloody hand*, made love to, and was accepted by, a very elegant and a very sensible young lady, who cemented his shattered affairs with twenty thousand pounds: his second son, adding to the disqualifications

enumerated above, under the head of the young Baronet, a profligate character, and some traits of idiocy, carried off a widow with a jointure of 800*l.* per annum; so that I take credit from this instance for some *data* towards the value of a title, as well in the direct as in the collateral line: and, having this one fact confirmed by so many other cases, that I might corroborate my *nostrum's* efficacy with as much proof as any Empiric announces to reclaim people from the silly practice of dying, I venture to value a title of Baronet at a round sum of thirty thousand pounds to the male line, besides *opportunities* to the daughters.

Thus, then, I hope I have shewn that rage for titular distinction is not in itself reprehensible, but merely according to the intrinsic value or emptiness of the title sought. When a man has not every thing solid, he is a fool if he risk the substance for the sake of additional ornament; but where a man is so absolutely contemptible as to have no one claim on earth to respectability *per se*, he will do well to lay out some money in purchasing what cannot make him individually more despicable, but may be a very comfortable provision for his family.

No. 32.

*Si qui ægrotat quo morbo Barrus, haberi
Et cupiat formosus. Eat quacunq̃ue puellis
Inficiat curam quærendi singula.——*

Hor.

IMITATED.

Who with a face deform'd by pale disease,
Strives (of his beauty vain), the laughing girls to please.

ANON.

I Know not any thing which can tend more immediately to convince us of the trifling manner in which the time of millions is spent, than the contemplation of the progress of a man of gallantry.

As there are, perhaps, some of my readers who may be unacquainted with this species of beings, I must inform them, that a man of gallantry is one who professedly dedicates his time to the service of the ladies, who can pick his teeth without awkwardness, attend a lady to the ball, point out to her the fashionables who are present, pick up her glove, enable her to

escape from a press in the lobby of a theatre, and hand her to her carriage. I wish I could say that his exploits ended here; but I am obliged to add, that he too frequently applies his talents to the seduction of innocence, and the ruin of domestic felicity; that he will, without compunction, endeavour to violate the wife of the man for whom he expresses the most ardent affection, and that he never uses his freedom of intimacy but with a view to assist his designs against youth and beauty.

To guard against a man who possesses principles like these, we might reasonably imagine that the husband or the father would not need much incitement, or at least, that where necessity rendered intimacy unavoidable, the knowledge of his arts would induce us to guard against his attacks on our honour or our peace. But such are the effects of volubility, of flattery, and politeness, that the company of a man of gallantry is generally more acceptable, even in domestic retirement, than that of the man of knowledge and integrity, who has no other ornament than that of virtue or learning.

The company of a man of gallantry is not only agreeable, but his example is considered as so worthy of imitation, that he who wishes

to shine as a gentleman imagines that he is obliged to copy his vices. The man who is too plain to be successful with the ladies, endeavours to console himself for the contempt of his mistress, and to gain the applause of his companions, by insinuating that he has been as happy as he desired.

Will Whiffle is a fellow of great volubility, and possessed of a tolerable fortune; but his person is plain, and in the place of gentility he employs impudence. As his father had risen by degrees from poverty to wealth, the education of his son was neglected till too late. As Will soon discovered that he was not able to shine in the company of the neighbouring gentlemen, and as his disposition was naturally volatile, he was struck with the attentions which his handsome friend Beau Dapple received from the ladies, and was as much delighted by the easy air with which he related the success of his amours: he therefore resolved to become a man of gallantry, and having equipped himself in a dress in the summit of the fashion, a coat too short to reach to his waist, a hat which extended one inch and three quarters in the brim, and having received a competent number of instructions from his

dancing-master, he thought himself sufficiently qualified to come, be seen, and conquer. The first lady, however, to whom he addressed himself, having treated his advances in a manner which he had not prepared himself to expect, he has never been able to muster up sufficient resolution to pursue his object, but satisfies himself by gaining in appearance, what he loses in reality. *Will* generally places himself, in the morning, near the house in which some celebrated beauty is known to reside, and as soon as he perceives that he is observed, pretends to disappear in the utmost confusion. He sometimes, however, is contented with allowing the world to guess at the name of his *dulcinea*, by dropping a nightcap in pulling out his handkerchief. When he goes to an assembly, he allows about two inches of a lady's garter to dangle from his pocket, or the bead of a necklace to sparkle on his finger. He is very expert at imitating a lady's hand, and has sometimes addressed to himself very elegant compliments upon his beauty and politeness. If any one accuses him of too familiar intimacy with a lady he affects to be astonished at the insinuation, but at the same time takes care to inform you that to be sure he once thought that she did

appear a little favourable to him ; that she had a little—he did not know what to call it—a little penchant—for him—but it is very foolish in any one to imagine that he can be much favoured, as the lady has a husband who watches her with so much anxiety; and as the daughters do him so much honour as to think his company preferable to that of some other gentlemen. “ To be sure,” adds *Will*, (looking in the mirror) “ Lady D. did compliment me yesterday upon my improved appearance, but it was nothing but civility—nothing more. For my part, I do not pretend to be a favourite of the ladies; I have had two or three little bits of affairs indeed, but they were nothing but trifles—nothing else upon my honour.”

Impudence and confidence have a very great effect upon the female heart. I am acquainted with few ladies who do not love an admirer the better for the number of his conquests. *Will* had the fortune to excite a passion by the fame of his gallantries, and to be the object of love to a lady who, when his reputation was small, had despised him. She appointed him an assignation in her bedchamber. *Will* having mistaken the window, got

into the chamber which belonged to his dulcinea's brother. Here, while the real lady was panting with expectation, *Will*, who imagined that it would be a pity to awake the supposed one, sunk very ungallantly into the arms of Somnus. In what manner he might have proceeded when he had finished his nap, I shall leave philosophers to determine, and relate that the brother having discovered at midnight the partner of his bed, auguring rather unfavourably of the motives of his guest, confined him till the morning, when the trembling culprit was brought before a magistrate and examined. As *Will* is not possessed of the gift of secrecy, he readily declared the cause of the adventure, and was going to produce the proofs, when the brother accused him of a malicious slander. The magistrate interfered, and ordered his pockets to be examined, when to the joy of *Whiffle*, and the astonishment of the brother, the following epistle, which I have copied verbatim et literatim, was discovered.

“ My dear Whiffel, *

“ You woud no dout imagine, that I wished to afrunt you when I danded with Mr. P. but you may depend on it, I am not insensibel

* It is now fashionable for ladies to spell badly.

to your attentions, which you will find if you will cum to my chambre window at ten.

Yours devotedley eaver.

But these are not the whole of his adventures. He has preserved his life from five duels by submitting to be caned; has caused three divorces by dropping a letter in a drawing-room, and condemned two beautiful young ladies to incurable melancholy by the pretended contemptuousness of his glances and address. He has prevented four matches by anonymous hints of his own previous seductions, and driven a husband to desperation by his remarks upon the paragraphs of a newspaper.

If these murderers of reputation would consider the effects which the gratification of their vanity may produce, the coolness or animosity of friends, the reproaches of a lover, the revenge of a husband, or the sorrow of a father, they would surely consider their own indiscretion with remorse. Whether the boasts of a man of gallantry be authorized by success, or be caused by a wish to shine, they are undoubted proofs of a foolish head and

a corrupted heart. He must surely be no common villain who can blast the characters of others for the gratification of his own vanity; yet how much greater must be the depravity of him who can destroy the fame of one whom he himself has seduced by the semblance of affection from the path of innocence, to vice and misery!

No. 33.

*Mutavit mentem populus levis, et calet uno
Scribendi studio ; puerique patresque severi,
Fronde comas vincti cœnant, et carmina dictant.*

HOR. Epist. 1. lib. 2.

IMITATED.

Now times are chang'd, and one poetic itch
Has seiz'd the court and city, poor and rich ;
Sons, sires, and grandsires, all will wear the bays,
Our wives read Milton, and our daughters plays :
To theatres and to rehearsals throng,
And all our grace at table is a song.

POPE.

THE following correspondent seems to be ignorant that many of the paradoxes by which he proposes to gain celebrity, have been defended by very distinguished philosophers. As I am happy, however, to have an opportunity of giving circulation to opinions so *strange* and consequently so *delightful*, I shall insert his letter without any other alteration than that of placing the most elegant of his phrases in Italics.

To the Author of the Saunterer.

SIR,

As you are a brother of the Quill, and will consequently be able to sympathize with the fortunes of a fellow scribbler; and as I feel it necessary that some record may be given to the world of my progress through life, that the curiosity, which will no doubt be great after I am gone, may be gratified; I have sent the following history to you, that it may be immediately given to the world, and afford it an opportunity of comparing the elevation at which I shall probably arrive with the obscurity of the condition from which I am emerged.

You must know then that my parents, notwithstanding they have always endeavoured to curb my spirit, and to give me advice, are with all their pretences not half so well bred or so wise as myself. To tell you the truth, *my father* does not understand Latin, nor *my mother* French; *my father* has sometimes made me blush by mistaking JONSON the poet for JOHNSON the moralist, and *my mother* con-

founded me when I have been talking about the genius of DRYDEN, by saying that she could not conceive what made me so partial to a poor dirty TEA-DEALER.

Well Sir, my father and mother, although they had as little money as wit, contrived to get me under the tuition of Mr. SPINTEXT, by whose wholesome admonitions and frequent cudgellings, I at length (thanks to his severity) got through a sufficient quantity of Latin to be able to write some very classical verses, and to gain the applause of my master and the envy of my school-fellows, by repeating extempore

Vox veritatis ad solam volat.

When I had now sufficiently qualified myself to be able to astonish my companions by the splendour of my talents, I thought that it was time to throw off the shackles imposed upon me by a schoolmaster. I returned home to silence *my father's* wisdom by my new-earned learning, and to confound *my mother's* volubility by a scrap of *Greek*.

My father, however, notwithstanding my abilities, my rhetoric, and my gravity, actually insisted upon my chusing a profession, and,

to the disgrace and ignominy of genius, the succeeding year brought the philosophical, the learned, and the penetrating *Wildgoose* behind the desk of an attorney ! You may easily imagine, Mr. SAUNTERER, that such a situation as this, to a man of my spirit was intolerable. *As necessity however has no law*, I soon resolved to make myself as contented as I could; to learn the quirks of conveyancing, to retire upon the estates of my clients, and then to astonish the world by my SENILITIES.

But luckily for me a scene was opened to my view which made me have higher expectations. A sonnet which I had written, having fallen into the hands of Mr. DOUBLETEX, the Rector of the Parish, he did me the honour to declare that it was very grammatically and cleverly composed. You will readily imagine, Sir, that such a flattering encomium as this, had a proper effect on my mind. I now employed all my leisure hours in courting at the same time Philosophy and the Muses. Various were the acrostics, the rebuses, and the odes, which I distributed among my friends, all of whom expressed their rapture and admiration. I now grew a little bolder, and at length had the satisfaction of seeing my charades in the

MONTHLY LOOKING-GLASS, and my amatory pieces in a conspicuous part of the Morning PASQUINADE. You will not expect, Sir, that I was indifferent to such multiplied honours. I justly thought that obscuring myself in the vulgarity of business, would be (to use a simile of my own) like a pearl remaining in an oyster-shell. I therefore resolved as soon as my apprenticeship was expired, to commence my literary career with some notable production, and which I resolved to write during the intervals of business. This last undertaking indeed I had almost relinquished, as I met with innumerable difficulties in the execution of it. I have sometimes been called from comparing the poetry of Shakespear and Milton, to enable a miser to disinherit a prodigal, and have been interrupted in the middle of a paragraph by the hurry of a miss to secure her pin-money. I have been prevented from ending a sentence melodiously by the deed of an estate, and have lost the substance of a thought by my attention to the wisdom of a MARRIOTT.

I am, Sir, at length released from this bondage of the body, and confinement of the mind, and have entered the emporium of lite-

rature, where I expected that learning was rewarded, and genius honoured. I have published my HISTORY OF LITERATURE; but would you believe it, Mr. SAUNTERER? *notwithstanding* it was universally admired by the friends who perused it, and considered by them as the most interesting production of the age, *notwithstanding* genius, diligence, and wit, were all employed in its composition, and *notwithstanding* I had the generosity to give two folio volumes, with *Russia backs* and *lettered*, for the moderate sum of five pounds five shillings, I have neither been rendered independent by the profits of its sale, nor honoured by a degree from the University of Oxford! Nay, what is worse, Sir, the Reviewers, who sit like Minos, in literary judgment, and conduct the authors who appear before their tribunal, to the regions of poverty or the temple of riches; *notwithstanding* my promises, my flatteries, and my bribes, have declared it to be the production of pedantry and ignorance! I have no doubt, however, but that in spite of the envy of these snarlers, my future productions will meet with the approbation of the age, that my abilities will be distinguished, and that my name will be

considered as a sure recommendation of every literary trifle.

If you wish to know what plans I have laid for the foundation of my future eminence, I need only assure you that I have consulted the fashionable taste; I can *epithize* like Mrs. Robinson, the RAINBOW VIOLET and THE BLUSHING carnation. I have composed a poem in which I have taken care to use the *frolic* spring, the *frantic* eye-balls, the *lurid* clouds, the mellowed tints of the *red eyed* morn, and the *darkening frown* of the stormy sky. I expect to convince the world that a man who has any pretensions to wisdom, will not be so foolish as to submit to the influence of sleep; and hope to gain the applause of the bucks, the bon-vivants, and the philosophers of the age, by shewing, that if we resolve to live we may bid defiance to the attacks of death. I intend to prove that Eve was black, and that the Europeans are degenerated from the colour which nature implanted on mankind; and propose to receive subscriptions for a treatise which will convince the most obstinate, that men were originally born with tails, and that with a little industry that ornament to beauty might be grafted on the future generation. I expect to

convince the world that Dryden was without genius, and Pope a rhymmer; that Stockdale is a wit, and Matthias a dunce; that Knight is inspired by the muses, and Bloomfield is possessed by the demon of dullness; that Aiken can improve the beauties of Johnson, and Letitia Barbauld will command the applause of distant ages; that Wharton is dull and Melcombe dignified. And let it not surprise you, Mr. SAUNTERER, that though I have forgot all my learning but the Colloquies of Corderius, I expect to raise a reputation upon the literary ruins of Greece, of Italy, and France. I intend to censure Homer for effeminacy, and Virgil for harshness, to confine the praise of Demosthenes to wit, and that of Varro to ease; but to deny the energy of one, and the learning of the other: to prove that Boccaccio is insipid, and Dante inanimate, that Boileau is mean, and Voltaire sublime.

You will no doubt begin to censure my impertinence, but these preliminaries were necessary to introduce a proposal which I have to make you. If you will employ a paper in the praise of my writings, I shall in turn compliment the Saunterer. I flatter myself that this

is a compromise which you will accept, when you consider how fashionable such good offices are at the present day, and when you perceive the amazing success which such recommendations have in rendering dullness witty, ignorance learned, and affectation beautiful; and you surely cannot object, in return for my applause of your genius and penetration, to distinguish me by the title of the ingenious and learned

WILFRID WILDGOOSE.

London, May 3, 1805.

No. 34.

——— *Festinat enim decurrere velox
 Flosculus angustæ, miseræque brevissima vitæ
 Portio; DUM BIBIMUS, DUM SERTA, unguenta, PUELLAS
 Poscimus, obrepit non intellecta senectus.*

JUVEN.

IMITATED.

Our full grown youth and vigour flies apace,
 While melting pleasures in our arms are found;
 While beauty smiles, and while the bowl goes round,
 While in o'erpowering bliss entranc'd we lie,
 Old age steals on us,—ere we think it nigh.

HARVEY.

I Have sometimes wished, notwithstanding my hatred of hypocrisy, that the present generation of mankind was more secret in its pursuit of pleasure. The hypocrite does not pervert the principles of others by example, but, except to a few whom experience has enlightened, he supports, by his dissimulation, the doctrines of morality and religion, and practises deceit without ridiculing virtue.

The man of rank and power, whose example may improve the happiness and virtue of man-

kind; or add vigour to immorality and impiety; must heighten the guilt of every crime and folly by the openness with which he practises it. Every man must hate the miser who endeavours to persuade us of his generosity, or the voluptuary who wears perpetually the mask of purity; but how much more ought we to censure and detest the miser who allures others to the love of avarice, or the voluptuary who corrupts the innocence of youth by the scenes and maxims of debauchery.

Aselgamus passed the early part of his life at the university, in pursuits by no means favourable to learning. He could drink his third bottle without giving any symptoms of derangement, and throw a dice with ease and dexterity. I need not relate the number of riots he led, the singularity of the stratagems in which he was engaged, or the merit of the jests which set the table in a roar. His hours were past in all the extravagance of frolic and of whim, till at length he found himself free from magisterial restraint, and bade adieu to ideal confinement, to taste the fruits of pecuniary independence.

As his estate was large, and he was descended from one of the first families in the kingdom, he was soon distinguished by the neighbouring

bucks as one whose fortune and birth might render him a respectable member of the turf. He was therefore driven, without much persuasion, to *Newmarket*, and was so much allured by the huzzas of the mob, the manœuvres of the grooms, and the finesse displayed in the art of betting, that he enlisted himself a member of the jockey-club. Here his noviciate might have, perhaps, been unfortunate, had he not been initiated by one of the knowing ones, whom he released from a prison, in all the mysteries of Jockeyship. A few heats in which his knowledge of the game was eagerly displayed, established his reputation, and he soon had the satisfaction of seeing the whole race of Dukes, Knights, and Earls, move like satellites around him. The opinion of Aselgamus was necessary before the comparative fleetness of a race-horse could be determined. His curricie, which was so contrived as to be driven at the rate of twenty-four miles in an hour, was the envy of all the sporting amateurs in the kingdom. His skill in managing the manœuvres of his steed was equal to his knowledge. Amid the acclamations of his brother peers, he had the honour of risking his neck in a match at *Newmarket*, and of arriving the first at the goal. It is true that

he was not crowned with a wreath of laurel, like the victors of Olympia, but he gained the object of his ambition, in being complimented on his success by all the grooms and jockies of the course.

The science of jockeyship did not, however, engross the whole of his attention: he employed some of his time in gaining the favour of the ladies. As he could dance genteelly, and talk with volubility, he did not find much difficulty in his progress. Modesty he knew would retard his designs, and he therefore obeyed its contrary, impudence. The day he devoted to betting and tittle-tattle, and the night to the instructions of Chesterfield; by the advice of that nobleman he formed his address, and studied the graces by a mirror every morning before his engagements required them. He read with diligence all the books of jeux d'esprits and repartees, that he might use them extempore. A great part of his time was employed in beautifying his teeth, paring his nails, adjusting his handkerchief, and forming his smiles. His hands were whitened every morning with *Soap of Ambrosia*, and his hair perfumed with the *Anima of Roses*. He soon eclipsed all the beaux who attempted to rival

him. The fashions of the day were regulated by his fancy. He had the honour of taking two inches from the brim of the hat, and of inventing three fashionable coats. Whenever he entered the boxes of the theatre, or performed the honours of an assembly, he was at once saluted by the smiles of envy and beauty; and no female party of pleasure could be formed without his assistance. But enjoyments like these did not satisfy his desires. To the extacies of love he united the joys of wine. From the enjoyment of the bottle he repaired to the temple of Venus; his vivacity increased by the fumes of Burgundy, and his success proportioned to his vivacity. He spent the day in conquest, and the night in the arms of an opera dancer.

The approaches of age must at length be perceived, and those who have hastened its attacks must feel its imbecility. But Aselgamus was too much flattered by former success, to think of retiring from scenes in which he thought he had but to appear to conquer. The wrinkles of age were concealed by lotions, and its debility counteracted by pills and electuaries. His complexion was defended, during the night, by a mask of muslin, and his body preserved

erect by springs and girdles. His teeth were formed of ivory, from the hands of a celebrated dentist.

Yet, notwithstanding these precautions, he was sometimes mortified by perceiving that the ladies neglected him for men who appeared more able to perform the duties of a lover. He was sometimes complimented upon the freshness of his looks, considering the advancement of his age, and sometimes agitated by malicious congratulations on his birth-day. The beaux enquired some particulars respecting the court of George the Second, and the ladies wished to be informed of the circumference of the hoop.

Aselgamus, however, still continues insensible to the frowns of the fair and the laughter of the young. He is still a perpetual attendant at every assembly, play, and rout in the metropolis. At the assembly he cannot dance, and the play he cannot hear. He seems to think, that to gaze at beauty is to possess every enjoyment of life. He may be seen every morning, his body shivering with the breeze, and his head shaking with the tremors of old age, eyeing the fleeting shadows of the fair as they glide from his view, and leave him to struggle

between the desire of youth and the impotence of age.

It might be imagined that old age, while it brought along with it not only an inability for vice but a more imminent danger in pursuing it, would be consecrated to a review of the earlier periods of life, and to some endeavours for amendment. If the profligacy of youth be attended with unhappiness, how miserable must be the profligacy of age? If a mockery of religion be madness in the bloom of life, what excuse can be offered for the man who pursues vice on the borders of the grave? If the path of licentiousness be difficult and dangerous when we are attended on our way by health, gaiety, and beauty, when the morning of life is illuminated by hope, and the flowers of pleasure exhilarate us by their fragrance, how much more dreary and dangerous must be our way when debility, languor, and disease, retard our footsteps? when the storm of evening lowers over our heads; when the clouds of night encircle us, and we stand on the brink of a precipice, which every moment sinks beneath our feet, and threatens to hurry us to the bottom!

He who in his old age persists in the vices of youth, will find it difficult to reform. His vices are the vices of a mind corrupted by early debauchery. While the guilty are hurried away by the violence of temptation, there may be some hope of their return to virtue; but what can be expected from the man who falls into vice when passion is no longer powerful, and when the limbs are no longer able to execute the desires of the will? A corruption like this is a corruption to which no human remedy can be applied; which only a power superior to that of man can cure.

While we indulge in the pleasures of youth, we flatter ourselves that when old age arrives we shall be able to atone, by our piety, for our early profligacy. But were we certain that our atonement would be then accepted, our passions ought to be subdued while they are still beneath our power, by reflecting upon the difficulty of aged reformation. He who has cherished the hope of a late repentance, will perhaps find that with the imbecility of age he retains the depravity of youth, without its pleasures, its powers, or its hopes.

No. 35.

Nam negligere quid de se quisque sentiat, non solum arrogantis est, sed etiam omnino dissoluti.

CICERO.

To disregard the opinion of others concerning us, is not only a mark of arrogance, but of the greatest profligacy.

IT has been observed by LA ROCHEFOCAULT, that hypocrisy is a tribute which vice is obliged to pay to virtue. No man, whatever may be his wickedness, can prosecute his designs with success without wearing the garb of unblemished integrity. Few are willing to repose in security on the friendship of one by whose want of sincerity they may be endangered, and he, therefore, who hopes to be trusted, must give to the world some assurance that he will not repay its favour with ingratitude.

If this necessity of preserving the appearance of virtue be sometimes productive of hypocrisy, it is frequently a preservative from vice. Few of the passions are too strong for indolence, and he who has once experienced the fatigue of per-

petual simulation will at length be willing to purchase ease at the expence of imperfect enjoyment. We are sometimes honest when the favour of the world depends on our integrity ; but when the gratification of our passions is unattended with the necessity of concealment, we indulge them without caution or anxiety.

It is too frequently imagined, that actual virtue may exempt its practiser from any regard to its outward appearance. They who know the purity of their own hearts, are apt to believe that to endeavour to preserve that purity from suspicion is beneath the dignity of innocence. He who is unconscious of deceit or wickedness is seldom willing to think that his actions are misconstrued. He imagines that the tenor of his life may preserve him from the attacks of malice and malignity.

The principal source of this error is that self-love which even virtue and experience are sometimes insufficient to subdue. There is a principle in the human mind which leads us to persuade ourselves, whatever may be our follies and absurdities, that we are objects of admiration or of love. The knave believes that his vices are concealed, and the virtuous man that the approbation of the world is beneath the dignity

of virtue. When he has performed an action which he remembers with self-approbation, he easily believes that the world will do justice to his motives; he pleases himself with the consciousness of having deserved the praise of his fellow-creatures, and finds at last that his actions have been ascribed to the impulse of pride, interest, or malignity. He has perhaps learned from conversation, or from books, that mankind is censorious and deceitful; but self-love inclines him to believe that to himself they are honest and sincere.

Among the female sex there are too many who imagine that their levity may be excused by the world, if they do not in reality violate the laws of chastity. There is no female character so common as that of the coquette; a woman who spends her hours in creating lovers for amusement, or who merely, through the dictates of caprice, ogles every man who appears in her company; while she wears the robe of licentiousness she preserves the tranquillity of her mind by the consciousness of innocence, or rejects the resemblance of virtue because it is sometimes used for the concealment of vice.

It ought to be remembered, that the world can judge only from appearances. The weakness of human nature may sometimes lead us into vices from the ignominy of which a life of virtue will not be sufficient to preserve us. If the remembrance of a long continued course of goodness, therefore, be instantly obliterated by an action of momentary weakness, how difficult must it be for him who disregards the appearance of virtue to secure his reputation from attack? If a continual regard to the opinion of the world be sometimes insufficient to preserve us from disgrace, how much greater must be the fall of him who by the tenor of his life has excited the voice of censure and of ridicule?

To the fair sex, in particular, a regard to outward appearances is not only necessary to preserve the favour of the world, but is likewise a real safeguard to virtue. She who has once begun to hear without embarrassment the jests and the impertinence of the licentious and the idle, will not long be able to struggle with temptation; the bounds of decency, when once passed in idea, will not be sufficient to secure us from rushing into the arms of vice. She who has once forgot the reverence which is

due to the world, will forget in time the reverence due to herself and to virtue. While we are conscious of the approbation of the world, we are secured from vice by the desire of preserving it; but when the stimulus which once excited us to virtue is withdrawn, we sink into indifference, or submit to the first impulses of passion. When, by our disregard of outward appearances, we have lost the praise or the favour of mankind, we are no longer willing to toil in the path of rectitude without reward, we resign ourselves to the power of despair; and as we have been punished with the guilty, we are easily hurried to the commission of their crimes; we cannot relieve our minds by the consideration of the injustice of the world, for he who submits to the imputation of wickedness, through his indolence or pride, has little reason to complain if his virtue be suspected.

But even independent of the praise or censure of the world, merely as it may affect ourselves, it ought to be remembered, that unless we preserve the most scrupulous decency in our outward demeanour, our attempt at virtue is imperfect, and all our labour and anxiety useless. He alone fulfils his duty who sup-

ports, by the dignity of his outward behaviour, the truth of his opinion. Virtue, like the diamond, is unadmired by the world, and insignificant in value, till polished from its dross, when it is not only gazed at for its beauty, but communicates a portion of its lustre to surrounding objects. It is in the power of every man to influence, in some measure, the opinion of others by his address and conversation; and he, therefore, who in appearance sanctions vices which he perceives in reality with horror, or laughs at virtues which he practises in secret, is not only culpable by neglecting to employ persuasion in the cause of truth, but must likewise forfeit his claim to reward, by encouraging the errors of the vicious; he feels the mortification of virtue without its pleasures, and is only distinguished from the guilty by the superior folly of his labours.

No. 36.

*Cuique non auferret fructum voluptatum omnium
solitudo?*

CICERO.

Who is there, that is not deprived by solitude of every enjoyment?

NOTWITHSTANDING the many praises of solitude which have been so copiously given to the world by a celebrated writer, I am afraid that his writings display more of the warmth of an enthusiast than of the rational coolness of a philosopher. He does not seem to have observed the minute realities of life with sufficient attention, but to have represented human nature as his fancy had formed it; always virtuous when secured from temptation, and sufficiently impressed with the beauty of the universe to look through Nature up to Nature's God.*

There is in the human mind a principle which continually influences us to be discon-

* When this was written I had not read the second Part of Zimmerman on Solitude.

lent with our present situation, and to look upon that of others with envy and desire. Perhaps there is no vice to which solitude gives so much strength as to this. Undisturbed by intrusion, and without a variety of objects to divert our attention, we fall in the moments of *ennui* into a melancholy gloom, which leaves behind it, even after time and reflection have enabled us to despise the object of regret, a moroseness of temper, never satisfied by present enjoyment, but always recurring to the past, or looking forward to the future.

Of similar origin is that prejudice which leads us to regard the opinions which we have imbibed in our early years as the standards of truth. The man of solitude, unused to that contrariety of sentiment which is displayed in the mixed societies of the world, espouses a class of ideas which become too familiar to his mind to be easily obliterated, and every opposition to which he treats with contempt or ridicule. Unaccustomed to contradiction, he learns to consider all his opinions as just, and is equally surprised and mortified, when he finds, on a further intimacy with mankind, that he is despised or laughed at.

Honorius was descended from one of the most respectable families in the kingdom, and after receiving a liberal education, was introduced at the age of twenty-five to all the dissipation and the pleasures of the metropolis. Distinguished by his learning, the elegance of his form, and the ease of his address, he was alike the favourite of the fair, the wealthy, the learned, and the gay. The old respected him as the apparent heir to the honours of his father, and the young as one whose rank and manners entitled him to an influence in the empire of fashion. His decision upon the merits of a particle; or the value of a necklace; was equally decisive. In the societies of literature he was the philosopher and the scholar, and in the circles of politeness the man of fashion and the gentleman.

While he was thus indulging in all the pleasures which his rank, his talents, and his supposed riches could procure him, his father expired, and upon an examination of his affairs, it was discovered, that, by gaming and other extravagance, the estate which devolved to *Honorius* was merely sufficient to support him in the rank of a country gentleman. As

he was too proud to owe that rank which he once claimed as his right to the courtesy of others, and too refined to associate with men whose conversation he had learned to despise, he resolved to seclude himself from the world, and to employ his hours in the cultivation of his estate. Here, in the company only of his books, his mind was insensibly tinctured with melancholy. He passed the evening in watching the rays of the setting sun, or in tracing the meanderings of the stream which glided through his grounds, in silent reveries of thought, till the voice of the neighbouring peasantry roused him from reflection, or he was surprised by the shades of night. As his seclusion from the world became more austere, he gradually lost his remaining vivacity. He would frequently sit whole hours without allowing his mind to be engaged by any of the usual relaxations of life: he became morose, watchful, and suspicious, and at length in a silent paroxysm of passion, to which he had been led by comparing the elevation of his early life with his present insignificance, he ordered his servants to deny him to any of the neighbouring gentry who

might visit him; he dropt the correspondence of his friends, and sought a refuge from the pangs of thought in the amusements of study. As envy, regret, and pride, preyed in his bosom, he insensibly became a misanthrope. The happiness of others harrassed him perpetually with the remembrance of the splendour which the imprudence of his father had denied him. His mind was by turns perplexed with jealousy and ambition, and his time wasted in silent exclamations of regret and disappointment.

Such was the state of mind in which *Honorius*, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, after thirty years seclusion from the world, was welcomed by the intelligence that his uncle had expired, and that he was declared to be the lawful inheritor of his fortune. *Honorius* bade therefore an adieu to the solitudes of W. not without being in some measure disordered by the change, and arrived in the metropolis of fashion in which he had once performed a conspicuous part, and which he still selected as the sphere where his accomplishments would be displayed to the best advantage; his heart panted with anxiety as he reflected upon the scenes in which he had passed the sprightliness

of youth, and he again believed himself able to regulate the etiquette of a drawing-room, to decide on the minutiae of honour, and to enliven the witty and the gay by his wit and gaiety.

But he found that the system of politeness was changed ; his observance of the ceremonials of former times, which he considered as the standards of perfection, rendered him the object of courtly ridicule. His ignorance of etiquette made him uneasy and constrained. He could not enter a room or move his hat without committing some violence to decorum and the graces. The spencers, the short coats, the unpowdered hair, excited at once his surprize and laughter. Of those who had formerly delighted him by their beauty or their wit, some were retired from the stage of fashion to regret the misapplication of their time, and others were long since forgotten in the grave. The beau whose volubility had raised the envy of his rivals, was now transformed into the antiquated bachelor, a railer against the coquetry of the age ; and the belle to whom the flatteries of fashion had been willingly allowed, was now condemned to rail at the treachery

of man, or to soothe her mind by the remembrance of her early conquests. The empire of fashion was usurped by men whom *Honorius* remembered lisping on the knee, and a new race of beauties claimed the adoration of the gallant and the young. Wherever *Honorius* went he found that to shine amidst the young and the gay, it is necessary that we should like them possess youth and gaiety. The beaux received him with real indifference, and the ladies with pretended warmth. As they treated him with ridicule, he beheld them with contempt. In comparison with the companions of his youth, the beaux appeared frivolous, and the belles affected. The warmth of attachment, and the innocence of freedom, which he remembered as the characteristics of his youthful contemporaries, amid all the refinements of politeness, seemed to have vanished. At length disgusted with what he thought the frivolousness of the age, he bade adieu to the society of vivacity, politeness, and beauty, to seek the society of men of learning.

But in the society of men of learning he was equally alone; they sometimes happened, indeed, to discuss topics of which he was a

master, but retirement had given him prejudices which were every moment attacked. From the brows of the wits of Queen Anne's reign, whose names he revered with enthusiasm, he found that a new race of writers had gained the wreath of Genius. The poetry of Addison was no longer considered as sublime. The periods of the Rambler were quoted in the circles of literature, while the sentences of the Spectator were forgotten. Energy was more admired than wit. The criticisms of Warburton had yielded to those of Johnson, and the comedies of Cibber to those of Cumberland. The poetry of Cowper had the applause of criticism, and the novels of Mrs. D'Arblay had been allowed a place near those of Richardson.

All these changes were perhaps natural, and such as might have pleased *Honorius* had he lived long in the commerce of the world, but they were not such as had pleased his imagination, and they appeared ridiculous. After having spent a month in fruitless researches after happiness, he returned to his retirement, and died at the age of seventy-five, in the firm persuasion that the men of fashion of the pre-

sent age had not the least pretension to sense or politeness ; that our belles were less beautiful, less chaste, and less modest, than the belles of the court of George the second, and that our literature was unworthy of the age of Anne, and only remarkable for obscurity, pomposity, and dullness.

No. 37.

——— *Meum qui pectus inaniter angit
Irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,
Ut magus; et modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis.*

HOR.

IMITATED.

'Tis he who gives my breast a thousand pains,
Can make me feel each passion that he feigns,
Enrage, compose with more than magic art,
With pity and with terror tear my heart,
And snatch me o'er the earth, or thro' the air
To Thebes, to Athens, when he will, and where.

POPE.

To the Author of the Saunterer.

SIR,

IT has been frequently observed that he who wishes to excite applause ought rather to glide imperceptibly into notice, than to excite jealousy or expectation by premature display of his talents or genius. Every one who boldly claim the favour of the world without a regular solicitation of its suffrage, is not only liable to the

shafts of envy, but to the censure of the credulous and the sanguine. They who have listened to the voice of fame, will have formed a picture of ideal excellence. Of the original, every beauty will be lessened, and every fault exaggerated. The general tales of rumour are a sufficient apology for such a weakness. *Chaucer** has described them as receiving some addition from every tongue, till at length they are destroyed at the approach of truth, as the clouds which appear to the eye of the peasant in the form of an army or a city, before the rays of the meridian sun vanish into air.

Such were the reflections which were naturally excited in the mind on the arrival of Master Betty at the Newcastle theatre. Unwilling to believe that he whose talents had been acknowledged by the justice of criticism was unworthy of the laurel which criticism had granted, yet afraid to indulge in too ardent expectations, lest they might end in disappointment, the writer of this article waited with a mixture of impatience and fear, till the Young Roscius appeared in the character of Douglas. That his fears were hushed, and his expectations gratified, is no mean praise. He has

* In imitation of Virgil's description of Fame.

seen Master Betty, and, like the rest of the world, has seen him to admire.

The character of Douglas, heroic, animated, and virtuous, struggling between poverty and ambition—between the ties of affection and the hatred of deceit, was sufficiently varied to afford a competent display of his powers. The modest dignity of a youth, who, though at first unconscious of his own importance, breathes the spirit of manly independence, was depicted with every power which art or talent could supply. When, after mentioning the lowliness of his birth, he recites his own exploits, beginning with the line.

“ For I had heard of battles, and I long’d;” &c.

and ending with—

“ An arrow from my bow had pierc’d their chief,”

the expression of his countenance and action seemed to inspire the spectators with equal energy. His fall from the height of animation to a consciousness of his own meanness, was equally admirable. His manner was equally free from timidity and blustering. His modesty was visible, but it was the modesty of a hero.

The delivery of the speech—

“ Small is the skill my lord delights to praise,

“ In him he favours,” &c.

was given in the most impressive manner. The averted fire of his eye; the changes in his countenance, from unimpassioned reflection to temperate animation, and from animation to calmness, and the graceful dignity of his action, altogether formed a figure which a Raphael might have gazed on with rapture.

His pronunciation of—

“ ———Mild he spake,

“ And ent’ring on discourse such stories told

“ As made me oft revisit his sad cell,”

was literally an echo to the sense. His delivery of the passage—

“ Mighty God! my brother!

“ Oh! my brother!”

was defective. It was the expression of tenderness rather than of horror and astonishment.

But the part in which he most eminently shone, was in the animated expression of proud exultation—

“ Blest be the hour I left my father’s house ;

“ I might have been a shepherd all my days,

“ And stole obscurely to a peasant’s grave.

“ Now if I live with mighty chiefs I stand,

“ And if I fall with noble dust I lie !”

The enthusiasm was communicated to every bosom. His countenance and air expressed the pride, the triumph of a high-born chief. If I may speak poetically, the earth seemed too little for his grasp. The exclamation struck the audience more forcibly, as it might with some alteration be applied to himself.

If he ever failed it was in the scenes of tenderness. His eye melts into tears, and his countenance is expressive. He does not fail for want of power, but through excess of refinement. The tone of his voice is too artificial. It is not the tone of real, but of pretended affection. His words are pronounced with too studied a melody. The broken voice and the half-choaked utterance are totally wanting. He displays something of nature, but too much of art. From this censure, however, must be excepted his delivery of the words—

“ Art thou my mother ?”

which were delivered with pathos and nature. When he pronounced the word *thou*, his eye

was expressive at once of doubt and tenderness. His emphasis seemed at the same time to ask the question, and to express that affection she had previously inspired.

His taunts upon Glenalvon were better expressed than by any other performer I remember to have seen :—

“ And though I have been told that there are men

“ Who borrow friendship’s tongue, to speak their scorn,

“ Yet in such language I am little skill’d ;

“ Therefore I thank Glenalvon for his counsel.

His expression, by his action and his voice, of the line——

“ Now thou may’st scoff in safety,”

was justly rewarded with a thunder of applause.

His dying scene was the most pathetic which I ever witnessed. The mingled sentiments of abhorrence, regret, affection, and resignation, were admirably expressed. He displayed nature in her most affecting form. When faint and breathless he sunk upon the ground in the agonies of death, he again appeared to forget his wound, in the remembrance of the din of battle :—

“ Oh had I fall’n as my brave father fell !

“ Turning with great effort the tide of battle !”

His voice was again animated ; he rose from the ground for a moment, but his strength failed him, and, overcome with agitation, he expired, gazing upon his mother.

Upon the whole his performance of Douglas was correct, poetical, and animated, such as commanded applause and gratified expectation. That it was faultless cannot be asserted. His principal defect is too great a display of art. He is too refined for nature. His action and elocution are, like the numbers of Pope, polished into weakness. In the *Iliad* Jove thunders in echoing cadence, and in the theatre Douglas dies like a hero and a gentleman. This censure will perhaps add to his merit in the eyes of many of his admirers. The imitation of a player may perhaps be compared with propriety to the production of a poet, and there are more of those who are pleased by the melody of Pope, than of those who are delighted with the magnificence of Dryden. But still his refinement is a fault. We admire Betty, and forget Douglas.

In *Tancred* we behold a monarch distracted with love, jealousy, sorrow, and revenge. It is in *violence* of passion, and in solemn dig-

nity, that Master Betty appears with the greatest excellence. His loud, sonorous, and hollow voice, is equally expressive of rage and animation. The majesty of his attitudes cannot easily be conceived by those who have not seen him. The fire of his eye, and the flexibility of his countenance, are formed to express the workings of hatred, horror, and despair. His performance of Tancred was in many scenes superior to that of Douglas: he displayed more of nature and less of art. This applause, however, must not be granted to some of his tender scenes with Sigismunda. His expression of love was too declamatory; it was the well-polished persuasion of an orator, rather than the warm and trembling accent of a lover. The words—

“ Let me exhale my soul in softest transport,

“ Since I again behold my Sigismunda,”

were delivered with the coolness of artifice rather than with real warmth of feeling. That he has never felt the passion of love, is an excuse which would seem to indicate (what cannot be admitted) that he is only excellent as a boy; neither is it of much weight, since, if to express the passions with excellence it

were *always* necessary previously to have felt them, how would Betty be able to imitate that of jealousy?

In the scenes of madness, dignity, and horror, he was more happy. The words—

“What dost thou mean? thy words, thy look, thy manner,

“Seem to conceal some horrid thought—heavens!

“No!—that was wild—distraction fires the thought,”

thrill'd through every heart. The speech—

“Insolent Osmond know”

“This upstart king will hurl confusion on thee,”

was delivered with majestic dignity. The attitude is all that is striking in this speech, and it was admirable.

His picture of madness exceeded every thing which imagination could conceive. The audience were at once agitated with horror, astonishment, and pity.

“Hah! my brain is all on fire;

“A wild abyss of thought

“Th' infernal world discloses! see! behold him!

“Lo! with fierce smiles he shakes the bloody steel,

“And mocks my feeble tears!”

His expression of the foolish laughter, which often succeeds the paroxysm of madness, was

happily imagined, and wonderfully executed. He sunk down near the body of Sigismunda, amidst the applause, the horror, and the tears of the audience.

No. 38.

To the Author of the Saunterer.

SIR,

THE next appearance of Master Betty (Thursday, August 22.) was in Hamlet, a character which has always been considered as one of the chief tests of an actor's powers. In this part, more than in any other, he was subjected to a comparison with the veterans of the stage, and he perhaps will not suffer by the comparison. The woe-worn countenance, and the affected madness of the unhappy prince, were depicted with great excellence. His voice

is well suited to the tones of melancholy. If his performance of Hamlet was not in general so faultless as that of Douglas, yet in particular scenes it was superior. In Douglas we applaud the performance in general;—in Hamlet we are surprised by unexpected beauties. Douglas never wearies the attention; Hamlet frequently melts the audience into rapture.

The scene with his father's ghost was admirable. Some celebrated performers have imagined, that because the spirit of his father was expected, Hamlet ought not to be very violently agitated. But this is a mistake. Every man who sees danger at a distance, feels himself more powerfully intimidated at its approach. A company of heroes advancing to battle would be at first terrified by the thunder of the enemy. The same is the case with respect to astonishment. Though we expect something wonderful, our fear and our wonder are excited by its appearance. The action of Master Betty, therefore, upon the appearance of his father's spirit, when he started back with violent surprise, was just and natural. After his first emotion was subsided, he gazed upon the ghost in mute amazement. His attitude and

eye were expressive of terror and curiosity. When he addressed his father in the words—

“ I'll call thee Hamlet,

“ King, Father, Royal Dane—Oh answer me!”

He sunk upon his knees as if at once inspired by fear and duty. His expression of the word *father* was pathetic and beautiful.

The delivery of the speech,—

“ What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,

“ That he should weep for her? What would he do

“ Had he the motive and the cue for passion

“ That I have?”

was inimitable. His bosom seemed to be labouring with unutterable woe. If his expression of this passage may be judged by its effect upon the audience, it was the expression of nature herself.

His soliloquy—

“ To be, or not to be,” &c.

was just and impressive. For a man it was excellent, but for a boy it was wonderful. He seemed to feel every sentence he uttered—a praise which is not always due even to Betty.

His delivery of the beautiful eulogy on man was not natural. It did not appear to arise from

the peculiarity of his situation or his feelings, but from a desire to display the power of his voice and action. It was the exclamation of a player, not of Hamlet. His expression of the words—

“ In apprehension how like a God!”

was, however, more affecting.

His speech to the players was admirably delivered. His action and voice exemplified his precepts. This praise perhaps includes every other. With Kemble, who has been much admired in this scene, I am unable to compare him *. The slight remembrance I have of Cooke induces me to prefer his performance of this part to that of Betty. Cooke is more striking—Betty more correct. In his enunciation of the word *bellow*, which has been so much admired by the London critics, there was nothing remarkable.

He excels much in irony, and even frequently falls into it without the authority of his author.

* It is now near four years and a half since the writer of this article had an opportunity of seeing Kemble's performance of Hamlet, when he had not attained his 14th year, he does not therefore retain any strong remembrance of it.

Hamlet's taunts upon the king were a perfect specimen of this excellence—

“ 'Tis a knavish piece of work, but what o' that; your Majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us not. Let the gall'd jade go wince; our withers are unwrung.”

But the climax of his performance of Hamlet was in the closet scene. In this he displayed every excellence of the actor; justness of attitude and action, expression of countenance, and propriety of emphasis. But what is of more importance and independent of all these, he appeared to feel the passion he represented, and inspired it in others. His comparison of the portraits of his father and his uncle was the most impressive part of his performance:—

“ Look here upon that picture and on this,
“ The counterfeit presentment of two brothers;
“ See! what a grace is seated on this brow;
“ Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
“ An eye like Mars to threaten or command;
“ A station like the herald Mercury,
“ New lighted on an heaven-kissing hill;
“ A combination and a form indeed;
“ Where every God did seem to set his seal
“ To give the world assurance of a man.
“ This was your husband. Look you now what follows
“ Here is your husband.”

The spectators were melted into tenderness. His eye spoke his thoughts more powerfully than his tongue. The rapture with which he kissed the picture of his father enchanted the feelings of the audience.

His scene with the grave-diggers was well performed. He was arch, correct, pathetic, and natural. This praise includes every excellence.

Of his fencing scene I have a too imperfect knowledge of the art to be able to judge. But by the graceful ease and apparent dexterity with which he performed it, the amateurs seem to think that he is a proficient in the science. There is, however, much room for deception. As a stage-fencer he is, perhaps, without an equal.

Upon the whole, his performance of Hamlet was such as to do honour to his talents and his name. He often surpassed expectation, and seldom disappointed it. He is, however, too fond of treading the boards. He sometimes causes a languor in the scene, by "fretting and strutting an hour upon the stage." He appears to imagine that an actor ought to be the same time in performing an action, as a real

hero. A little more activity in this play and Douglas would be an improvement. His attitudes and motion, likewise, though easy and majestic, are too regular. In the dignified scenes of Tancred, Douglas, and Hamlet, his attitudes were nearly the same. Whenever he wishes to express grief or agitation, the same motion of his head is sure to follow. We are sometimes reminded of his dancing-master. This fault, however, is not remarkable till he has been seen more than once, and may be easily corrected.

In Achmet all his attractions were united; while he was refined and polished, he was pathetic and natural. The scene with Irene, which has been censured by the London critics, was the best part of his performance. His expression of love was much superior to his efforts in Tancred. His pronunciation, however, of

“Thou sum of every worth! thou heaven of sweetness!”

was too vehement. The rest of this scene was faultless. To this praise his expression of the following speech was likewise entitled:—

“ O thou hast rous’d a thought on which revenge

“ Mounts with redoubled fire!——

“ ————Oh blessed shade!

“ If yet thou hover’st o’er thy once lov’d clime

“ Now aid me to redress thy bleeding wrongs;

“ Infuse thy mighty spirit into my breast

“ That undismay’d

“ I may pursue the just intent, and dare

“ Or nobly to revenge or bravely die!”

The scenes with his mother were well executed. If in Douglas and Tancred he failed in the expression of tenderness, he cannot be charged with this defect in Barbarossa. He stole from nature and made the theft his own. In the scenes of horror and agitation, he never suffered the attention to cool, but hurried the passions of his audience along with him. Expectation was wound up to the highest pitch, and every mind trembled with hope, anxiety, and fear, till the fall of Barbarossa. This is a higher panegyric than it is in the power of criticism to give. Something may be ascribed to the merits of the play, but all the power of imagery, versification, or invention, are weak, unless aided by the genius of the actor. If the tears of an audience be moved by distress, the actor must have pictured that distress with pathos and feeling. Thousands have read Barbarossa with indifference, but few have seen Master Betty perform Selim without emotion.

His performance of Romeo I have not seen. In Richard it was not Gloucester who trod the stage, but Master Betty. On his performance of Frederic I have no remarks to add to those of which the public have been long in possession.

In my next paper, in a general estimate of Master Betty's powers as an actor I shall add some other cursory remarks upon the plays I have already mentioned. I have only to lament the inadequacy of my talents to the subject. The remarks I have already made must be rather recommended by their candour than their ability. A theatrical criticism cannot be expected to delight by elegance of language. The words, *delivery*, *expression*, *pronunciation*, *attitude*, and *action*, continually recur. A literary criticism may be read by all with pleasure, for all have an opportunity of considering its justice; but a theatrical critique must be, to many of its readers, insipid and obscure.

No. 39.

To the Author of the Saunterer.

SIR,

I Shall now proceed to give my general estimate of the character of Master Betty, not only as it will enable me to exemplify some of my former observations, but as it will perhaps give more pleasure to your readers than a more particular criticism.

To nature Master Betty is much indebted ;— his form is elegant, his eye expressive, and his voice melodious. Perhaps his countenance is too florid and voluptuous. To the gifts of nature he has added the ornaments of art. His action and elocution have been improved by continual practice and instruction. *Upon the stage* he can seldom be detected in an awkward attitude, or a false pronunciation. Every sentence is uttered with tuneful harmony, and every motion performed with grace

and majesty. His transition from one passion to another, however rapid or abrupt is easy and dignified. Tears succeed to smiles, and madness to sorrow, without suffering the spectators to feel languor or disappointment.

It cannot be denied, however, that his performance is too artificial and refined. He sometimes appears not to feel the passion he endeavours to express. The falls of his voice are too frequent and unnatural: he shows too much of stage deception. We do, indeed, admire the ease of his attitudes, and the harmony of his sentences, but we admire the player, not the hero. He has likewise another very striking fault, which I know not how he will correct—his voice is always the same. A good actor should be able to assume a different voice in Hamlet, Tancred, Douglas, and Richard. Master Betty has not yet attained this excellence. After seeing him for the ninth time we are at once wearied and delighted.

It has been asserted by a writer of respectable talents, he is rather indebted to diligence and instruction for celebrity than to native genius. Yet if this be admitted of

Betty, it must likewise be admitted of Garrick, of Barry, and of Kemble. Nor does it lessen the merit of Master Betty, for where shall we find another boy, who with equal instruction, can display equal excellence? Master Betty cannot be praised for performing what he was never taught, but for profiting by the lessons he has received. If he do not possess that power which we distinguish by the name of genius, yet he possesses those talents which form the actor. It is surely sufficiently wonderful that a boy of thirteen years of age can be instructed to tread the stage with ease and intrepidity, and to move the horror or the pity of an audience.

It perhaps will not be doing him an injustice to compare him with a youthful prodigy of the eighteenth century; to one who, with superior genius, was condemned to waste his life in poverty and sorrow—to linger for a while beneath the frown of insolence and pride, and to pay by grief, indigence, and labour, for a literary immortality.

To form the actor are required elegance of form, melody of voice, vivacity of the eye, and expression of the countenance; a mind observing and intelligent, formed readily to re-

ceive impressions, and to retain them; a memory retentive and capacious, a conception rapid and acute.

To form the poet are required, as to form the actor, acuteness and rapidity of conception, and retention and capaciousness of memory. But to these must be added an intimacy with the human heart, profundity of thought, and readiness of invention; that genius which creates, that imagination which amplifies; a knowledge of nature and of man, an acquaintance with science and with books.

The powers of Betty were discovered when it was yet easy to mature them. Before he ventured to appear upon the stage, his talents had been improved by instruction, and his efforts encouraged by praise. In the lap of leisure, secure from the storms of indigence, he was never condemned to mourn over the pages of Shakespeare by the feeble gleamings of a midnight taper. He enjoyed all that affection and indulgence could procure—a mind exempted from pecuniary anxiety—a day unclouded by the frown of insolence.

Chatterton owed his improvement to his own genius and fortitude: he had no praise to animate; no care to cherish; no guardian to pro-

fect. By him excellence was pursued in defiance of poverty, restraint, and inconvenience. In the hours stolen from labour, and perhaps from sorrow, he raised his own future immortality. The most valuable of his productions were the offspring of difficulty and distress: Genius alone enabled him to soar above the clouds of ignorance. To example or instruction he owed nothing.

The superiority of natural powers must therefore, without hesitation, be allowed to Chatterton. If it be difficult to arrive at excellence, when encouraged by leisure, indulgence, and applause, what must be the genius of him who can reach the magnificence of poetry amid grief, poverty, and ignorance? Betty, in the arms of leisure, was enabled to attend to the precepts of his friends; to correct the faults of negligence or habit; to snatch new beauties, and to improve excellence. Chatterton, beneath the power of poverty, had neither opportunity to correct, nor leisure to polish. He did not arrive at excellence like Betty, by gradual improvement; but appeared at once in perfect lustre. Betty may be compared to the rising sun, which ascends slowly to its zenith—Chatterton to the risen sun, which disperses the

clouds that obscure its radiance, and burst upon the sight in meridian splendor. All that astonishes in the works of Chatterton was his own creation—all that pleases in the performance of Master Betty, has been acquired by unwearied attention. The genius of Chatterton conquered difficulty—the talents of Betty equalled his instruction. Chatterton is the child of nature—Betty the pupil of art.

The admirers of Master Betty will have no reason to accuse me of partiality to Chatterton, for I am doubtful whether, to constitute an actor, genius is necessary. By genius, I mean that power, without which judgment, acuteness, penetration, and knowledge, are of no avail; that power which conquers restraint, and animates the page of unlettered ignorance. He who is possessed of elegance of form, expression of countenance, acuteness of perception, retention of memory, and power and melody of voice, may, by attention, become an actor; but of what avail are all these qualifications to form the poet? The poems of Bloomfield and of Burns were composed at the plough, but where shall we find a Kemble or a Betty who attained, in the same sphere, an equal excellence? No one can believe that, to form the poet, requires

less observation or intimacy with the world, than to form the player; but observation alone will perfect the player, while genius alone will form the poet. The art of an actor may be acquired, but that of the poet can only be improved.

In acquired powers, the superiority must be allowed to Betty, but those powers were not more happily employed in proportion to the number of advantages he possessed. Chatterton, under the impression of fear and anxiety, attained a considerable smoothness of versification. Master Betty, in the lap of security and indulgence, attained propriety of accent and emphasis, ease of motion, and grace of attitude.

The superiority of Chatterton will be somewhat diminished by the difference of age. Master Betty appeared to the world before he was twelve years of age—Chatterton when he was fifteen. This difference, however, will not appear considerable, when it is remembered that Chatterton had but two hours a day in which he could employ his pen. His manuscript must have been a considerable time beneath his hands, and opportunity could not allow him to make much correction. But there is a more important consideration. A boy at any age, if

he have every other requisite, will be able to express the passions by his voice and countenance; but the words of a language, after every other requisite is acquired, must be gained by observation. The player, it is true, must feel the words he pronounces, but there is a very material difference between this knowledge and that which is necessary to apply them. Every school-boy can read *Virgil*, but how many will be found that can put a translated sentence of the *Æneid* into its original language? It is more extraordinary, if every other circumstance had been equal, that Chatterton should have wrote the *Battle of Hastings* at sixteen, than that Master Betty at twelve should have played *Douglas*.

The rewards which Chatterton and Betty have respectively received, are like the circumstances under which they attained excellence.

Betty rose at once to fame and affluence. He was never condemned to feel the stings of insult and of want, to strive against poverty, or to bow to insolence and pride. His talents were at the same time admired and rewarded. He found himself, at the age of fourteen, the possessor of a fortune fully adequate to all the elegancies of life; the companion and the fa-

vourite of the great—the wonder and the idol of the vulgar; for him no honour was thought too high; no reward too liberal; even the voice of censure was employed in vain, or if heard, was heard without attention.

To Chatterton, the voice of praise and the smiles of fortune were equally unknown. *He* had no wealth to purchase enjoyment—no name to command attention. To him the ephemerae of fashion were the insulters of poverty, and the mockers of distress. Hope never brightened his prospects—no friend to genius ever lightened his labours. *He* did not languish away his youth in the possession of pleasure, elegance, or comfort. *A penny tart was to him a luxury.* He lived in misery, and died by poison!

My colouring of these two portraits is not too high. I do not, however, think that the fate of Chatterton does so much dishonour to the age itself, as some seem to imagine. Had Chatterton procured to his works the publicity which necessarily attended the exertions of Master Betty, he would have been, perhaps, equally rewarded. He seems to have believed that, because he had discovered one example of avaricious pride, all our nobility were proud and avaricious. Chatterton *deserved* equal honours with Master

Betty ; but it does not impeach the candour of the age that they were not granted, for how can he be rewarded who is not known ? This neglect can only reflect disgrace upon a few individuals. Chatterton trusted to a Walpole, and Betty submitted to a Hough. The former was an *Orford*—the latter was a *man*.

In this opinion of the age I hope that I am not mistaken : I have, indeed, some reasons for fear. In what circumstances are *the relations* of Chatterton ? It is easy to see an error after it has been committed, but our repentance ought to render us more cautious. Perhaps the contemporaries of Chatterton would have declaimed with vehemence against their predecessors, had Chatterton lived the contemporary of Addison. *The sincerity of this or a future age will be best displayed upon the appearance of another Chatterton**.

* See the life of Thomas Dermody, by Raymond.

No. 40.

Nihil tam absurdum quod non dictum sit ab aliquo philosophorum.

CICERO.

There is nothing so absurd as not to have been asserted at some time by some philosopher.

THERE is perhaps nothing so injurious to the cause of truth as the cowardice of authors. It is sometimes dangerous for a writer, in pursuit of fame, to hazard opinions which, though just, may subject him to the imputation of singularity, and to the attacks of all who wish to gain popularity, by fighting in a cause already victorious by its age and numbers. It is necessary for him who wishes to rise in the estimation of the world, to assent in silence to its judgment till his fame is above the reach of envy and declamation; to a period when he will be heard with greater attention, and more implicit reverence.

But when an author, by the superiority of his genius, or a favourable concurrence of circum-

stances, has gained this eminence, he generally feels that an acquiescence in the judgment of others has led to an adoption of their prejudices, or that with the power to undeceive mankind he no longer retains the ardour of his early years. He is willing to preserve in peace the laurels he has already gained, without incurring the danger of disgrace by unnecessary diligence, and leaves the task of enlightening mankind to more bold and generous adventurers.

Perhaps, too, the pleasure of descanting on a laboured topic, and of displaying eloquence and learning in support of what few will have the courage to deny, may seduce the votary of literary fame. It is easier to employ elegance of language and beauty of imagery on a common subject than to express a new idea with propriety. It is easy to glide before the torrent of opinion, but intrepidity and courage are required to oppose it. A few only can be expected to act alone, but millions are formed to follow others.

Some of the same causes which tend to the perpetuity of one opinion may lead to the universality of another. The authority of a name, even without the sanction of time, will influence the decision of the ignorant or the

idle. To reject an old opinion may be dangerous, but to reject a new one is unfashionable. The few who are placed at the head of politics or literature are the only men who can think for themselves without interest or fear, and even they may be biassed by affection or vanity; the minor wits and scribblers of the day will echo alike their wisdom and their folly, their justice and absurdity.

The universality of an opinion is not, however, so dangerous as its perpetuity. The leaders of fashion are too capricious to retain with constancy their friendships or their hatreds. The idol which they have one day erected will the next be driven to the ground. The work which they once consigned to oblivion will soon be praised as the noblest monument of human genius. In one month Southey is a Milton; and in the next a Milbourn.

In literature it is easier to examine the justice of popular opinion than in politics. The abilities and resources of a statesman cannot be judged of but by their apparent effects; plans which ended in ruin and disgrace may have been the production of wisdom and of vigour; enterprizes crowned by success may have been formed by cowardice and folly:

but of the merit of an author every one has the means to judge; his weaknesses are the fruit of imbecility, and his beauties the production of taste and genius; every man has before him at once his plan and execution, and difference of opinion can only be caused by a variety of tastes, prejudices, and passions.

This easiness of examination, however, while it gives to every one the means of judging for himself, must be likewise allowed to add to the influence of sloth, and to cause a false confidence in the decisions of criticism. When we know that a subject eludes the most vigilant enquiry, we are not willing to submit in silence to the authority of another; but in cases which are more easily examined we trust to the opinion of others, since we believe that we can add nothing to their remarks. Even when the critic changes his opinion, we do not think that he would have retracted his sentiments on subjects which are so easily examined without sufficient reasons. The critic, therefore, while he is in some measure free from the suspicion which attends the politician, may be expected to retrieve his errors with greater publicity and willingness. The political apostacy of any character weakens, in the opinion of the world,

the cause he chances to espouse. The errors of literary opinion, which are very universal, may easily be rectified when the original propagators of those errors retract their sentiments; but in politics, the deserter of a party strengthens its followers by his desertion. In literature every one possesses the means of judging of the causes of a change of opinion, or believes that he possesses them; but in politics, as we feel ourselves unable to account for the conduct of a statesman, we readily ascribe it to ambition or avarice.

If it sometimes happens, therefore, that literary prejudices retain their strength for a long period of time, we must be forced to allow that their first propagators really believed the opinions they espoused, and that this error continued till it was too late to retrieve it; what first owed its success to its plausibility, is now sanctioned by the authority of a name, and will still influence the majority of mankind, till the cloud of prejudice be dispersed by some later champion of mental and literary freedom.

These are, perhaps, the common-place remarks of literature, but they are remarks which are sometimes necessary to be remembered.

Among the writings which have received the greatest share of the applause of the preceding century, may be numbered the lectures and sermons of Blair. We are informed by his panegyrists and biographers, that at the first publication of his works they were quoted at once by the learned and the young, the witty and the gay; that the rapidity of their sale was never equalled by any other production of the eighteenth century; and that for the fourth volume of his sermons he received the sum of two thousand pounds! Yet little can be found in any of his productions which displays much spirit, judgement, or philosophy. His sermons are remarkable for little more than an easy elegance of style, and a common-place mediocrity of thought. His lectures display the beauties of a mind improved by education, but little indebted to native genius or vigour. As a critic, when compared with Addison, (who like him endeavoured to familiarize his criticisms to the understanding of the vulgar) he will be found much inferior to his master. About half of his work may be consulted as an useful abridgement of the beauties of his predecessors, and the rest as a collection of popular absurdities.

The essays of KNOX have been praised by Boswell as successful imitations of those of Johnson; but to the sublimity or profundity of the Rambler Mr. K. can lay no claim. His style is not remarkable for harmony or strength; it is laboured and exact, without dignity or eloquence. His thoughts are seldom new or splendid, but are frequently just and ingenious. In attempting to surprise or elevate, he frequently falls into insipidity or bombast. His tribute to the memory of Chatterton I could never read without wishing that its author would expunge it from the future editions of his work, or present it to the world with important and numerous corrections. That Dr. Knox displays the learning and reading of a scholar it would be foolish to deny; but these accomplishments are too frequently obscured by the laboured stiffness of his diction. Were he to form his style by the ear rather than the hand, many of his faults would be avoided. I have observed with regret, that the alterations he has made in the later editions of his essays have greatly injured their spirit and their style.

I have heard Johnson censured for not giving Cunningham a place in the lives of the poets.

But I cannot help thinking, that by becoming his biographer, Johnson would have wasted his time and abilities. Cunningham is one of those poets whom all think it necessary to read, but few sincerely admire. To some readers, indeed, the easy feebleness of his verse, and the artificial ornaments which supply the place of sublimity and nature, may be a principal recommendation; but I believe that few of the readers of Goldsmith, Dryden, Pope, or Walcot, can receive much delight from the forced thoughts and nerveless lines of Cunningham. The poems of Prior have been justly censured as containing too much allegory and fable for the language of nature, and the same censure will apply to the pastorals of Cunningham. The following stanzas contain instances of unnatural absurdity. In the first the breath of Phillis is compared to the breeze of the bean-flower bed, and in the fifth the roses cannot do less than fade since *Damon* is false to his vows.

The rose, tho' a beautiful red,
Looks faded to Phillis's bloom;
And the breeze from the bean-flower bed
To her breath's but a feeble perfume.

*The dew-drop, so limpid and gay,
That loose on the violet lies,
Tho' brighten'd by Phœbus's ray,
Wants lustre, compar'd to her eyes.*

A lily I pluck'd in full pride,
Its freshness with her to compare,
And foolishly thought, till I tri'd,
The flow'ret was equally fair.

How, Corydon, could you mistake,
Your fault be with sorrow confest,
*You said the white swans on the lake
For softness might vie with her breast.*

The roses that crept to our mutual recess,
And rested among the sweet boughs,
Are faded, they droop, and they cannot do less,
For DAMON is false to his vows.

The verses entitled *Morning, Noon, and Evening*, contain much justice of description, but little that can interest the feelings. It is not necessary that the pastoral poet should describe every appearance of nature, but that he should select such incidents as can move the passions, and embellish them by just imagery and natural description.. Even sublimity tires when the at-

tention is not relieved, nor the heart affected by the expression of sentiment or the delineation of manners.

When we read the verses of Gray—

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from its straw-built
shed;
The cock's shrill clarion or the echoing horn
No more shall rouse them from their lowly
bed,

we are very differently affected than by the lines of Cunningham—

In the barn the tenant cock,
Close to Partlet perch'd on high,
Briskly crows, (the shepherd's clock!)
Jocund that the morning's nigh.

From the low-roof'd cottage ridge
See the chattering swallow spring;
Darting thro' the one-arch'd bridge,
Quick she dips her dappled wing.

In the lines of Cunningham description supplies the place of sense—in that of Gray the images are employed to adorn the sentiment.

I do not mean, however, that all description is lifeless when unaided by incident or reflection; the grand, terrific, and sublime, will still possess a power over the feelings, but the compass of imagery to which the pastoral poet is confined prevents him from moving the feelings, but by the introduction of human passions and manners into the business of his poem.

When I say that the verse of Cunningham is feeble, it may, perhaps, be answered, that he aimed at simplicity, and that he attained it; but even allowing him the praise of simplicity, this does not excuse his want of vigour, since vigour and simplicity are not incompatible with each other. Smollet's Ode to Leven Water possesses every characteristic of simplicity, yet is equally remarkable for energy and spirit. As it presents us likewise with a beautiful instance of the union of description and sentiment, I shall make no farther apology for inserting it.

On Leven's banks while free to rove
And tune the rural pipe to love,
I envy'd not the happiest swain
That ever trod th' Arcadian plain.

Pure stream ! in whose transparent wave
My early limbs I wont to lave,
No torrents stain thy limpid source ;
No rocks impede thy dimpling course,
That sweetly murmurs o'er its bed,
With white, round, polish'd pebbles spread ;
While lightly pois'd, the scaly brood,
In myriads cleave thy chrystal flood ;
The springing trout, in speckled pride,
The salmon, monarch of the tide,
The ruthless pike, intent on war,
The silver eel, and mottled par.
Devolving from thy parent lake
A charming maze thy waters make,
By bowers of birch, and groves of pine,
And edges flower'd with eglantine.

Still on thy banks so gaily green
May num'rous herds and flocks be seen,
And lasses chaunting o'er the pail,
And shepherds piping in the dale,
And ancient faith that knows no guile,
And industry embrown'd with toil,
And hearts resolv'd and hands prepar'd
The blessings they enjoy to guard.

The following verses of Peter Pindar likewise unite simplicity with strength, and breathe the real language of love and nature.

Oh thou whose love-inspiring air
Delights, yet gives a thousand woes,
My days decline in dark despair,
My nights have lost their sweet repose.

Yet, ah, who once like me was blest,
To others ere thy charms were known,
When fancy told my raptur'd breast,
That Cynthia smil'd on me alone?

Nymph of my soul! forgive my sighs;
Forgive the jealous fears I feel,
Nor blame a trembling wretch who dies
When others to thy beauties kneel.

For theirs is every winning art,
And fortune's gifts, unknown to me;
I only boast a simple heart
In love with innocence and thee.

I do not mean that the works of Cunningham are totally unworthy of attention; they certainly deserve perusal, and may amuse and improve an

idle hour ; but it is sometimes less invidious to censure than to praise. The poetry of Cowley and Tickell might have yet been read, had friendship or vanity been less lavish of its encomiums.

Though the following pieces have little connection with the preceding subjects, yet they cannot be more properly introduced than at the end of such desultory observations.

THE RESOLUTION.

WHEN first by youthful warmth inspir'd
I sought the joys of life to prove,
The sparkling bowl my bosom fir'd,
And nature taught my heart to love.

Amid the feast, the dance and song,
The goblet's liquid juice I prais'd,
Drawn by mirth's whirling stream along,
By wit allur'd, by madness rais'd.

Oh ! then by health, by fortune bless'd,
The rapt'rous dreams of youth were mine ;
My glass I fill'd, my girl I press'd,
And sang the joys of love and wine.

Alas how fleet life's pleasures glide
Before misfortune's howling storm:
How vain are youth and beauty's pride,
The piercing wit, the angel form!

How false is beauty's willing smile,
The accent soft or swelling tear;
How vain the lover's ceaseless toil,
The sigh suppress, the jealous fear.

How weak the purple cordial's pow'r!
To calm each grief, each care, how vain!
Alas! the poison charms an hour,
And leaves behind an age of pain.

A rival's form, a rival's art
Seduc'd the weak, the fickle fair;
He charm'd her eye, he stole her heart;
That heart too false, his vows too fair.

Too soon disease with tort'ring pow'r
Fills my hot veins with liquid fire,
Now racks the ling'ring midnight hour,
And bids each joy, each hope expire.

No more the pangs of love I'll feel,
No more the fever's fires be mine,
I'll from each treach'rous folly steal,
And bid adieu to love and wine.

Lines to her who will understand them.*

OFT as o'er Skiddaw's wilds I rove,
And mourn the vanish'd hours of love;
When the loud wind with boist'rous power
Drives o'er my form the stormy shower,
Or hoarse the pealing thunders roll,
And lightnings flash from pole to pole,
The thoughts of thee shall cheer my way,
And make the howling tempest gay.

When in the cheerful circle's round
Where wit and gaiety are found,
When the blithe dance, and merry tale,
And frolic, mirth, and joy prevail,
When converse sweet, and beauty's smile,
Shall both the happy hours beguile,
From love and friendship's arms I'll flee,
And seek a mistress and a friend in thee.

* Written at 13, for a Friend.

And when the haughty foe draws nigh,
When to my country's aid I fly,
When the loud cannon's thund'ring roar
Echo resounds from shore to shore,
When death and horror round me spread,
And carnage multiplies the dead,
When danger's weapons point to me,
I'll raise my arm and think on thee.

And when life's journey's almost o'er,
When youth and strength can charm no more,
When my last breath is almost fled,
And death flies hov'ring o'er my head,
When all the world flies from my view,
And friendship weeps its last adieu,
When the last sigh shall break from me,
I'll in that sigh remember thee.

No. 41.

*Ingenium sibi quod vacuas desumpsit Athenas,
Et studiis annos septem dedit, insenuitque
Libris et curis, statua taciturnus exit
Plerumque et risu populam quatit.*

HOR.

IMITATED.

The man who stretch'd in Isis' calm retreat
To books and study gives seven years complete,
See! strow'd with learned dust, his night-cap on,
He walks an object, new beneath the sun;
The boys flock round him, and the people stare;
So stiff! so mute! some statue you would swear
Stept from its pedestal to take the air.

POPE.

THERE is perhaps nothing more necessary to the happiness of a man of letters than an habitual indifference to the praise or censure of the world. He who learns to regard with much anxiety the opinion of others, and to regulate his happiness by their frown or approbation, subjects himself to the malice or caprice of all whom envy or vanity may excite to

oppose his claims. In proportion to his anxiety for fame, will be his difficulty to gain it. The man who awaits in silence till the applause of the world rewards his labours, has seldom much reason to repent his caution; but he who betrays impatience for its praise, or anger at its censure, presents, by his irritability and imprudence, an object to mankind of ridicule or hatred.

Did this folly, however, extend to the circles of literature alone, it might affect the fame of its practiser, but it would not injure him in the general estimation of society. But it is too frequently carried into the circles of common life, and extends its influence to the recesses of domestic privacy. The man who knows the extent of his own abilities, and whose talents or learning have gained him the applause of literature, is too apt to imagine that the same homage will be paid him in the usual intercourse of mankind. He therefore obtrudes his remarks and opinions upon the attention of every company into which he is admitted, without any regard to propriety or decorum, and is surprised to discover in the end, that neither his learning nor judgement have excited admiration or respect.

It should be remembered, however, that literature is not to all the chief pursuit of human life, that the mind must sometimes be relieved from the cares of business or of study ; that reflection and anxiety must sometimes be laid aside for gaiety and pleasure, and that, in the moments of relaxation, the convivial friend will be more willingly received than the dignified instructor. If the man of letters do not gain that applause in common conversation which he expected, he has not any reason to distrust his own abilities, but may reasonably ascribe his failure to the passions and dispositions of mankind. It may be doubted whether even the conversation of Johnson would have been agreeable to a circle of men assembled in the pursuit of gaiety and pleasure. Dignity and knowledge are neither respected nor admired by the votaries of fashion and frolic ; but are rather considered as intruders upon the general happiness, and are therefore neglected or despised.

It is desirable, indeed, to unite the man of fashion and the scholar ; to please the frivolous by dignity and ease, and the grave by philosophy and learning ; but such attempts are seldom made without debasing the dig-

nity of the scholar, or destroying the politeness of the gentleman. That seclusion which is required to form and improve the scholar, and that intercourse with society which is necessary to polish the man of fashion, it is seldom in the power of human industry to unite. It is possible, indeed, to support both of the characters *with decency*, but it is not easy to *shine* in one without relinquishing the other.

As I before observed, even the conversation of Johnson was not probably such as would delight an assembly of men of fashion. Amid the playfulness of his humour, and his readiness of wit, there appears a bitterness of sarcasm and a solemnity of expression, which would be little relished at a levee or a card-table. His form, indeed, was such as to prevent that easiness of address which is the characteristic of the gentleman; but it cannot be proved that with all the advantages of external appearance he would have distinguished himself equally as a courtier and an author.

Of Addison it is known that though in the company of his friends he displayed wit, humour, eloquence, and learning, yet in the

mixed society of the world, he was affected with a timidity which obscured the lustre of his talents. He probably possessed the manners of a gentleman, but he wanted that confidence which is required to shine in fashionable conversation.

Pope and Warburton are seldom mentioned as above or below mediocrity. The behaviour of Swift was a compound of whimsicality and rudeness. Gray was haughty and supercilious. Cowper was oppressed by unconquerable timidity. Bolingbroke, though he shone in conversation, is rather known for his personal accomplishments and his political intrigues, than for any depth of philosophy or extent of erudition. Chatterton says of himself, that he had the happy art of pleasing in conversation, but besides allowing for the illusions of youthful vanity, we should remember that his learning was but mean, and the persons with whom he formed his intimacies were perhaps neither remarkable for penetration nor politeness. Goldsmith was generally considered as a foolish but good-natured companion. Adam Smith was silent and unobtrusive. Chesterfield was a master and practiser of politeness, but he is principally indebted for his

literary fame to his knowledge of courts and men, and not to originality of composition, or energy of thought.

There have, indeed, been some instances of men uniting at once the erudition and knowledge of the scholar, and the ease and the suavity of the gentleman. But such men have generally owed their excellence to some favourable peculiarity of circumstances, which attended their application and industry. The man of letters has not any reason to be dissatisfied with his own success, though he should not reach the eminence of a Fox. To feel the pangs of envy and discontent because we are inferior to a few, is to forget our gratitude to that being who enabled us to soar above the sphere of the unlettered and the ignorant.

In the societies of literary men, there is allowed a freedom of opinion which is totally unknown in the daily intercourse of civility. In the common circles of the world, whatever is apparently ridiculous or strange, is readily considered by the vain and the superficial, as the object of laughter and of wonder; and he, therefore, who wishes to descend to the ease

of a companion, must lay aside much of his vehemence of speech, and conform himself to the comprehension and the prejudices of his hearers. This complaisance, however, is a virtue which is seldom practised by the man of learning, and its absence is therefore one great obstacle to his power of pleasing.

These observations, however, are only directed against that inordinate desire of applause which destroys the happiness of its possessor, and renders him contemptible to the world; but there is a civility of manners which is absolutely necessary in the common intercourse of life, and which it is in the power of every man to acquire. That dogmatism and irritability which are so frequently the characteristics of literary men, are generally the consequence of a childish indulgence of the passions, and may be conquered by circumspection and perseverance. The attainments of a scholar may only excite the envy or the hatred of the ignorant and the foolish; but good-humour is equally pleasing to the vulgar and the polite, the unlettered and the learned.

If the man of letters be not able to shine in the circles of gaiety and fashion, yet he has

little reason to complain of the infelicity of his lot. A consciousness of our own powers is the best preservative against discontent and envy. It is not the lot of every one to astonish or improve the world by the splendour of literary talents. He who by his genius and knowledge has gained the applause of the learned and the good, may look with intrepidity and triumph on the opposition or the laughter of ignorance and folly.

No. 42*.

*Lætus in præsens animus.**Amara lento**Temperet risu.*

How

IMITATED.

Then (since no state's completely blest)

Let's learn the bitter to allay

With temperate mirth, and wisely gay

Enjoy at least the present day.

}

IN that period of the world which the poets have distinguished by the title of the silver age, when the gifts of plenty were gained without toil, and the charms of pleasure enjoyed without guilt, the world was ruled by CONTENT, a lovely goddess, whose smile dispelled the demons of solicitude and care, who preserved the minds and the bodies of her votaries in perpetual health; who enabled age to preserve the happiness of youth, and youth to banish the anxieties of age.

* Written at 14.

But at length the tranquillity of her reign was disturbed by War, attended by Ambition, who hurried her from her throne, and condemned her to retire for security to the cottages of Poverty. Attended by Innocence and Peace, and arrayed in the garb of pastoral simplicity, with a basket hung carelessly on her arm, which contained some fruits from the garden of the celestials, she sometimes rested in the cottage of a solitary peasant, whose orchard supplied him with food, and whose thirst was quenched by a neighbouring rivulet, and sometimes mixed in the sports and dances of the shepherds: but even these abodes of simplicity and privacy were disturbed by Malice and Revenge, the ministers of War; and Content perceiving that she could no longer receive the adoration of mankind without sharing in their guilt, disappeared from the earth, and has never since revisited the habitations of mortals.

Upon the disappearance of Content, MIRTH, the son of Folly, and SORROW, the daughter of Misfortune, appeared on the earth. Mirth was arrayed in a robe of purple on which were depicted the victories of Love and the amours of Venus. In his right hand he held a goblet of nectar, and in his left a garland of flowers

whose fragrance overpowered reflection and lulled the senses to forgetfulness. His brows were entwined with a wreath of myrtle, and his hair perfumed with ambrosia. He promised to all who should follow him eternal youth and unmixed gaiety. The time of his followers was spent in perpetual festivity and nocturnal revelling—in tuning the harp to the songs of gladness, or listening to the jests of merriment and laughter.

The face of Sorrow was overspread with a sickly paleness. Her eye was always fixed upon the earth, unless the voice of Hope roused her from her reverie. She was arrayed in the robes of night, without ornament or elegance. Her dishevelled hair hung down in ringlets; and flowed on the bosom of the winds. The revelry of mirth was hushed at her approach; the verdure of the spring faded beneath her steps. She sometimes reclined upon the banks of a rivulet, whose murmuring soothed the senses to complacency, and sometimes overhung the battlements of a rock, while the noise of the screech-owl was imperfectly heard in the blustering of the storm, and the roaring of the winds inspired the mind with melancholy horror.

Mirth allured to his train the favourites of fortune, the gay, the giddy, and the young, all who had tasted of the stream of pleasure, and all whom wealth or flattery could seduce. The footsteps of Sorrow were followed by all whom calamity or age had rendered insensible to the allurements of Mirth; by disappointed lovers and unprotected orphans; by those who remembered the friendship of the dead or felt the insults of the living. Each led its respective followers from the paths of reason. The disciples of Mirth, intoxicated by the garland of forgetfulness, passed their hours in debauchery without the power of reflection. The votaries of Sorrow wasted their strength in the arms of languor, or were driven by despair to the depths of eternity.

But it sometimes happened that the votaries of Mirth deviated into the steps of Sorrow, and that the votaries of Sorrow were persuaded to join the festivities of Mirth. Hope painted to the mourning the felicities of joy, and Reflection represented to the gay the uncertainty of pleasure. As it was soon perceived, however, that by this inconstancy of mankind the power of both was endangered, they agreed to reign with divided empire; Mirth presided over the festivities of Marriage, and Sorrow ruled the

solemnities of Death. But it was easily found that the caprice and inconstancy of mankind still continued to pay to one power the homage which belonged to the other; the widow appeared at the altar of Mirth, and the bride worshipped at the shrine of Sorrow. In order, therefore, to preserve the power of each, and to prevent these inconveniences, they married, and brought forth **CHEERFULNESS**. She inherited the gaiety of her father, with the feeling of her mother. Beneath her reign the extacy of joy or the violence of grief were equally unknown. Health, Simplicity, and Innocence, were again the attendants of the cottage and the throne, and the earth was blessed by the smiles of Tranquillity and Peace.

No. 43.

Memorabilia.

AS the Saunterer has nearly approached its conclusion, I may, perhaps, be allowed the liberty of introducing into this paper a number of miscellaneous observations, which were too

trifling to stand alone, but which, when collected together, may not be unentertaining or useless.

When, in a former number, I praised the author of the *Pursuits of Literature*, I alluded to the general character of his writings. He is sometimes, however, inflated, and affected in his style, and frequently acrimonious and violent in his sentiments. His poetry, though it be in general forcible and easy, displays little of that archness or spirit which distinguishes the satires of Pope and Dryden; and is sometimes rendered weak and prosaic by the awkward introduction of characters and names, without regard to order or connection. His matter is loaded with imagery and metaphor, and his diction obscured by unsuccessful attempts at simplicity. His illiberality and violence are the principal deformities of his work, and materially injure its effect. He does not oppose his opponents with the calmness or politeness of a philosopher or a gentleman, but attacks them with the fury and the anger of a political madman. There is a warmth of expression, indeed, which may sometimes break forth amid the agitation and the noise of literary controversy; but the exceptionable passages of the *Pursuits of Literature*

are not the momentary effusions of party zeal, but breathe the uninterrupted spirit of bigotry and prejudice. When he mentions Pëter Pindar, he introduces, as frequently as possible, the epithet *obscure*; yet the celebrity of that gentleman alone could give him a place in the Pursuits of Literature. When I speak in this manner of the Pursuits of Literature, I do not speak with the resentment of a democrat or an infidel. Its principles are such as I have always supported, to the best of my ability, by my writings and conversation. It displays extensive erudition, great command of language, and a *knowledge* of the just principles of English composition. Though I have mentioned its faults, I am not insensible to its merits, and still think that its author deserves the gratitude of every man who regards with reverence the constitution and religion of his country.

The writer, however, who attacks the characters of others should give them an opportunity of confronting their accuser. That the unworthiness of a satirist diminishes the influence of his satire, is an opinion which the works of Dryden and of Pope may prove to be erroneous. Was *their* poetry less successful when accompanied by their names than if it had been given

anonymously to the world? Did vice or folly feel with less sensibility the dart of censure because they knew the hand from which they received it? Did Hogarth regard the satire of Churchill with greater indifference because he supported his attack by the authority of his name? The apparent cowardice and meanness of anonymous satire materially diminishes its force. The world is unwilling to credit the assertion, or regard the censure, of a man who dare not support the justice of his censure, or the truth of his assertion, by his personal testimony; even the objects of his satire, however guilty they may be, will triumph over the caution of their accuser, and deny the justice of a charge which cannot be supported by the personal authority of its author.

The propriety of *frequent* quotation likewise, for which the author of the Pursuits of Literature is so strenuous an advocate, may be reasonably doubted. He who thinks himself qualified to write upon any subject, should be possessed of the power to express his meaning without labour or obscurity; but he who employs quotations to express his meaning, is only a selector of the eloquence of others, and betrays, by the frequency of the practice, his own poverty

of language. When we praise Johnson as the greatest of the English writers, and introduce, to illustrate our opinion, the words of Horace; "Sed vatem egregium," &c. &c. we only give a proof of our own barrenness of invention. Quotations should only be employed at the head of a paper, to convey some idea of the nature of its subject, as illustrations of criticism, or to decide some disputed point in history or literature. Perhaps the Pursuits of Literature owes its celebrity, in some measure, to the frequent quotations from ancient and modern classics; yet any man may form such a collection of literary reliques, without any other qualifications than much industry and a slight knowledge of the languages.

Notwithstanding the praises which have been so lavishly bestowed upon the writings of Voltaire, he is, perhaps, one of those writers whose name will be forgotten by future ages. As a poet he seldom rises to sublimity, and frequently falls below mediocrity; he is frequently easy and sprightly, but seldom vigorous or pathetic. The highest praise which can be given to his smaller tales is that of amusing trifles. His *Candide* displays much sprightliness of fancy, and some knowledge of man-

kind, but little philosophy, judgement, or genius. As an historian he is flippant, inaccurate, and fanciful. Whenever he can find an opportunity to indulge a sneer at the government or politics of England, he sacrifices to his object every consideration of truth and probability. His criticisms are too frequently the offspring of prejudice or vanity, and display little energy of judgement or extent of learning. As a philosopher, he pursued an hypothesis till his fancy was wearied, without regarding the arguments by which it was opposed, or the weakness of the reasonings on which it was originally founded. His style is neither remarkable for strength nor splendour, but is easy and elegant. Except his history of Charles XII. his dramas are the only productions in which he has displayed much judgement, and they are remarkable for little more. Of the vigour or sublimity of Shakespeare, whom he foolishly attempted to rival, they do not possess the smallest portion. He may be justly considered as a man of some wit, much variety of knowledge, and considerable fancy; but as one who possessed little strength of mind or profundity of erudition; as one rather formed to amuse than to

astonish or instruct; to improve the plans and the works of others rather than to delight the world by the greatness or perfection of his own ideas. Condorcet's Life of Voltaire is one of the most uninteresting books I have ever read.

The following letters, as they relate to the Saunterer, (No. 39) may, perhaps, be inserted, with propriety:—

To the Editor of the Tyne Mercury.

SIR,

WHILE perusing the comparison of Betty with Chatterton, * * * * * it appeared to me that the only point of agreement between those celebrated characters, is their early maturity of genius. The difference of their fates must excite painful recollections in every mind not dead to feeling; but we should pause ere we censure the age at large for suffering the poet to linger out his short life in

misery, while every earthly blessing awaits the command of a Roscius; and consider whether this striking contrast does not necessarily arise from the different pursuits of literature and of acting.

Mind alone is the instrument of an author, and only minds of equal power can justly appreciate his merit; but he who possesses the faculties of sight and hearing may be enraptured with an actor, whose excellence depends so much on externals. How few of the applauders of Master Betty could taste the beauties of Chatterton! A good writer can never experience the personal enjoyments of a successful candidate for theatrical fame. He never hears the thousandth part of the praise his works may receive; but an actor is at once gratified by the applause of the fair, the learned, and the noble—even royalty itself repeats his eulogium. Alone and unsupported, the votary of literature may consume the best of his days in mental labour: the work which is produced may be of distinguished excellence, and yet his only reward be a scanty pittance while living, and an elaborate panegyric on his tomb! The experience of ages confirms the truth of this melancholy portrait. Look to our great moralist, Johnson, whose

papers may enlighten the most distant posterity, not honourably subsisting on the fruits of his genius, but depending on a pension for support ! The Ayrshire bard, whose poems reflect honour on his country, was rewarded, like some superannuated valet, with a place in the excise. Can the fate of the unfortunate Chatterton then surprise ? it should be recollected too, that if he really composed the *Battle of Hastings*, he commenced his poetical career by imposture. Whatever be its merits, he disclaimed them. Could he expect the reward of original genius for merely transcribing the manuscripts of Rowley ? His acknowledged, and latter productions, are generally deemed inferior to those which he attributed to the monk of Bristol.

The stability of a work, though it extend the fame of its author, renders it to him less advantageous. To repeatedly enjoy the beauties of a poem, were repeated purchases necessary, a poet need not envy the fortune of a Roscius : but a book, placed in a public library, may long yield instruction and delight to thousands, without its author deriving any pecuniary advantage whatever. Lewis and Home have no share in the triumph and reward which the theatrical phenomenon enjoys in the characters

of Osmond and Douglas. None can taste or feel *his* beauties without purchasing the gratification. For rivals of his fame, he has only his countrymen and contemporaries. An author enters the field against every genius of every country, and of the most distant ages—he may be said even to contend with futurity. When the mere actor quits this mortal stage, he leaves nothing for posterity to admire—his powers are felt only when they can be rewarded; but the poet enjoys a species of immortality, and extorts applause when reward cannot reach him. Perhaps, if the beauties of a poem expired with the poet, his life would be more honoured, and his death more sincerely lamented. In every other profession, distinguished talents ensure an ample fortune, while a celebrated author seldom enjoys the proud satisfaction of obtaining an honourable support by his genius. Patronage or pension, though it reflects honour on the man who bestows it, is degrading to him, and depresses that noble spirit of independence, which is the sure concomitant of genius, and which shrinks at receiving dignified alms from unlettered ignorance. Great indeed must be the love of fame—sweet the

whisperings of hope, to induce any one voluntarily to devote his days to a profession, in the pursuit of which, it is probable, he must submit to receive from compassion, what he feels assured is his right; to kiss the hand which humbles him to the dust! Indeed, the annals of literature render the question no longer doubtful, whether, were another Chatterton to arise, his

“ Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn,”

would be remunerated with the affluence of a Betty.

O.

To the Editor of the Tyne Mercury.*

SIR,

I should not have troubled you with the present trifling communication, had it not appeared to me that the writer of the observations, signed O. in your last week's paper, had, in some degree, mistaken my meaning. I did not point out the fate of Chatterton

* This letter first appeared under the signature of Justus. The spirit is preserved, though the expression is altered, as the original impression was lost. The latter part of it, which alluded to other subjects, is expunged.

as any disgrace to the age itself, but as a disgrace to individuals, and as a subject of melancholy reflection. Whether a boy of the age of sixteen ought, for such an artifice as that of Chatterton, to be condemned to obscurity and want, the limits of my paper will not allow me to enquire. Whatever may have been the deceit of Chatterton, his genius was known to Walpole, and that alone deserved some attention. Had he even appeared to be the copyist of another, his early curiosity and acuteness deserved the kindness and assistance of the great; but in this case Walpole acknowledges that he believed the poems to be the compositions of Chatterton himself, and that the discovery of the imposture alone prevented him from offering his patronage. Mr. Pinkerton, however, had deceived the world with as much ingenuity as Chatterton; yet the former gentleman was the friend of Walpole, and had the honour to raise a literary monument to his memory. Personal resentment, it appears, had greater influence than an hatred of deceit; and what in youth was a detestable and daring crime, in a man was a trivial and pardonable error!

HEWSON CLARKE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

WHEREAS several literary Ladies and Gentlemen, particularly William Godwin, Lord Malmsbury, Mrs. Smith, Mr. Southey, Mr. Lambe, the late Editors of the Analytical Review, and the Friends of the late Lord Monboddo and Mrs. Robinson, have claimed several of the images and opinions which appeared in my letter to the Saunterer, I think it necessary in justice to myself, to assure the public that I have not copied a single line from the works of Mrs. Robinson, Lord Monboddo, the Editors of the Analytical Review, Mr. Lambe, Mr. Southey, Mrs. Smith, Lord Malmsbury, or William Godwin, as witness my hand, this 10th day of June, 1805.

WILFRID WILDGOOSE.

No. 44.

*Et mihi purgatam crebro qui personet aurem ;
Solve senescentum mature, sanus equum, ne
Peccet ad extremum ridendus, et ilia ducat.*

NUNC ITAQUE VERSUS ET CÆTERA LUDICRA PONO.

HOR.

~ IMITATED.

A voice there is, which whispers in my ear,
(’Tis Reason’s voice which sometimes one can hear,)
Friend CLARKE be prudent, let your muse take breath,
And never gallop Pegasus to death,
Lest stiff and stately, void of fire and force,
You limp like *Bristed* on a Lord May’r’s horse.

FAREWEL THEN VERSE, AND LOVE, AND EVERY TOY,
THE RHYMES AND PLAYTHINGS OF TH’ UNBEARDED BOY.

POPE (Parodied.)

IT is in some measure necessary for him who wishes to promote his reputation, that he should not disclose himself till he finds that he has inspired some conjecture and enquiry. When a book is published without the addition of a name, attention is excited, and curiosity employed in examining the peculiarities of its sentiments and diction. If it be the production of genius, its fame is increased by the rumours which successively ascribe it, like the *Phillipics*

of *Junius*, to the orator; the philosopher, and the statesman; but if its faults are more numerous than its beauties, candour is willing to excuse those errors of which the author, by his silence, appears to be conscious. To a periodical writer, secrecy is peculiarly favourable. If he satirizes the vagaries of fashion, and unites to the erudition of the scholar the ease of the gentleman, he is painted by the fancy of his reader, as the favourite of the fair, or the companion of the great; his sallies are quoted by the beaux, and admired by the belles. The polite are gratified by the appearance of a paper conducted by a *master of the ceremonies*, and which enables them to shine without the toil of thinking; and the vulgar are willing to receive the instructions of a man who appears to be intimate with the circles of politeness.

But if he display profundity of thought and extent of knowledge, he is considered as a sage whose life has been spent in the pursuit of science and philosophy; as one to whom the circles of learning are familiar, and whose opinions may be heard without distrust, as the fruits of continual meditation and retirement.

The period has at length arrived which must conclude the labours of the SAUNTERER. He must now relinquish the dignity by which he has endeavoured to command attention, and must stand before the judgement of the world unaided by imaginary importance.

That all have read my essays without weariness, or that many have been impressed by the truth of my opinions, it would be foolish to imagine. My dullness may have been censured when I have aimed at wit, or my affectation ridiculed where I have attempted elegance. Some may regret that I have not more frequently descended to temporary subjects, and others that I have so seldom indulged in the sallies of pleasantry. The gay may wish that I had attended to the progress of fashion, and the amorous that I had endeavoured to instruct the lover or the man of gallantry. In the circle of a provincial newspaper, there are many to whom an essay on morality or criticism is useless. The politician would perhaps be more highly gratified by the conjectural sagacity of a Rose, than by the wit or the politeness of a Chesterfield: and the tradesman would probably prefer a list of the prices of stock to the pages of the Rambler.

I have not, however, any reason to complain of indifference, The enquiries of the learned are seldom directed to the columns of a newspaper; but wherever the circulation of the Mercury has extended, I have been read, and where I have been read I have received some attention. The praise of men, neither degraded by pedantry nor ignorance, I have always considered as the most satisfactory applause; for what can excite that praise, but sentiments which the experience of every man has proved to be true, or opinions which have flattered the votaries of wickedness and folly. Of the latter, after a minute examination of my own writings, I have not made any discovery; it is therefore reasonable to conclude that they have been in some measure recommended by the regard which I have endeavoured to express for the cause of virtue and of truth.

In those papers which I have devoted to personal satire, I have endeavoured to render that satire inapplicable but by its likeness. I have not traced the peculiarities of a character with minute exactness, but have endeavoured to distinguish those features which, though peculiarly applicable to one, may be applied to many. The conclusion of my paper has prevented me from pur-

suing my plan to such an extent as I could have wished, not from the pleasure which is yielded by the sketches of folly, but from my desire to hold up to the world the portraits of living virtue.

For my *verba ardentia* I shall make no apology. The sentences which the cold severity of criticism may pronounce too warm, may have a powerful effect when employed to support the virtuous, or animate the indolent.

Except those papers signed X. and the billet signed O. page 122, I have not received any assistance.

When I look back upon my own labours, whatever may be their insipidity or weakness, I am surprised at my own attempts. My writings, it is true, must be equally praised or condemned, whatever may be the situation or the motives of their writer. But surely if the author be disgraced, the man may be excused, when it is known, that they were not composed in the shades of retirement, or in the moments of ease and pensive luxury, by the man of pleasure or the votary of science; but amidst the bustle of business, and the murmur of a crowd; by one whose days have

been spent in commercial activity, and who, without displaying the genius, has perhaps furnished by his writings an example of the youth, the temerity, and the pride of CHARTERTON*.

If, notwithstanding my exertions and my hopes, the literary fabric which I have reared, should be doomed to stand only for a while a mouldering monument of useless labour, I shall at least receive some consolation by reflecting that I have not composed a line which, in the hour of sickness or of death, I could wish to blot. It is not in my power to command the praises of learning and greatness, but I have endeavoured to deserve the favour of piety and virtue.

HEWSON CLARKE.

Gateshead, June 13, 1805.

* The resemblance between this passage and that of Johnson, has been pointed out to me. When I first wrote it, I had not seen Johnson's preface to his Dictionary.

No. 45.

[I am indebted for the present number to a gentleman who has instructed the world on a more important subject; who has endeavoured to recommend Christianity by displaying its native excellence, and "taught the passions to move at the command of Virtue."]

"Docti" Laudantur et algent.—

JUVEN.

The Bookseller—substantial ore repays,—

The Author's fee—is hunger, rags, and—praise!

THE indigence of men of letters has long been a prolific theme of astonishment and regret.—In the opinion of some, the source of this evil originates in the learned themselves; that it is not their inability to become rich, but their indifference towards the attainment of wealth, which keeps them poor; or, if born to opulence, that it is their mismanagement of it, which deprives them of all its advantages. It cannot be

dissembled that these remarks are partially just. To the perpetual honor of the literary character it must be avowed, that it, beyond all others, is most exalted above the grovelling pursuit of riches—Riches, that golden path which *stupidity* delights to tread in its approaches to distinction. The man of genius, constantly employed in speculations of the greatest importance and sublimest nature, in enquiries after moral truth, or investigations of material harmony, has but little leisure, and less inclination, to descend from the contemplation of a planet or a spirit, to increase his property, by the addition of earth, yellow or brown, by the accumulation of guineas or the inclosure of acres.

As to the indiscretion of the learned, we lament that there is too much reason to induce our assent to the validity of *that* charge, which, however, though it cannot be repelled, may in some measure be extenuated, by considering, that inattention to the demands of their body proceeds from a too assiduous cultivation of their mind, and that the neglect of their own interest derives its origin in an undue regard to the welfare others. If the geometrician of Sicily fell a victim to the abstract intensity of his cogitations, be it also remembered, that

the attempts of Marcellus were not a little baffled by the ingenious devices of the same Archimedes; nor should it be forgotten, that if too active a zeal in the cause of science was in some degree productive of the embarrassment and embezzlement of the Baron Verulam, it was the philosophy of that illustrious man, which served as a torch, by the illumination of which the immortal Newton traced the courses of the stars and traversed the regions of unexplored space.

But whatever may be the discrepancy of opinion respecting the causes of the evil complained of, nothing can be more certain than that such an evil does exist*, and, that the existence of it is a disgrace and disadvantage to the community in which it is found†. How common is it to see a man, the better part of whose life has been devoted to the prosecution of Science and the propagation of Religion, a man of those fine feelings and delicate sentiments which generally accompany a duly cultivated mind consigned to the society of rustics, and

* *Causa latet, vis est notissima, OVID.*

† *Grande ferunt unà cum damno dedecus. HOR.*

obscured by the gloom of penury, while *lucky ignorance* is loaded with wealth and bloated with preferment. Surely this must be a stigma to any nation, especially to one whose established Church professes to provide for the maintenance of its Ministers. We would hope, that the wisdom of the Legislature will accelerate the period, when he who by his *office* is *Reverend*, may in his *expenditure* be *respectable*. Let any man with but the twentieth part of the application which a Student employs, and of the *hundred and twentieth* part of the *SENSE* which the Student possesses, engage in occupations of the lowest class, and he shall, in all human probability, within a few years realise an income which will render him not only support, but independence. But is this the case with those greatest ornaments of their Nation, the scientific and the studious? Far otherwise! For their commodities there is but a small demand, or should they enjoy a brisker sale, it is not the Author, but the Vendor who becomes the richer by them. It would not be difficult to produce the names of eminent men, the offspring of whose fertile brain have proved a *mine* of wealth to *strangers*, and a *fund* of *poverty* and *mortification* to the *parent* source from which they

emanated. From this survey of facts one might be induced to suppose, that the interests of Literature were at variance with the interests of states and of humanity; yet, surely, nothing can be more remote from reality than such an opinion. If there be any thing on earth which can promote the welfare of nations and individuals, it is, *next to christianity*, the cultivation of the intellectual powers of the human mind. It will be found, that in proportion as a nation is eminent for literature, in the same degree it will rise or fall in the scale of empire. I need not here refer my readers to the monarchy of Egypt, or the Republics of Greece and Rome; they must involuntarily occur to them on the slightest allusion. Nor was this the case with the nations of antiquity only; at this very day we behold the same unaltered influence of literature on the happiness of states. And what wonder is it that *that* whose obvious tendency is to enlighten the mind, refine the manners, to instruct men in the arts necessary to civil life, expel from the breast servile fear, and liberate the neck from slavish submission; what wonder is it, that *that* should be peculiarly conducive to the well being of a community! Hence it is,

that when men of despotic principles would enslave a people, one of the first measures to which they usually resort is, to encroach on the freedom of the press : hence also it is, that ignorance has always by the artful bigot been considered as the surest basis upon which he can erect the terrific structure of superstition.

And as literature makes us happy at home, so also does it render us respectable abroad. The names of a Milton and a Locke, a Newton and a Dryden, cannot but impress the minds of surrounding nations, I might say of the whole world itself, with veneration for that spot of land which produced and reared such illustrious characters. Indeed, so distinguished is the honor which men of genius and erudition confer upon a country, that when its dominion has been transferred, its splendor eclipsed, its liberties subverted, and its sumptuous edifices reduced to insignificant hovels, we still regard, with sentiments of peculiar admiration and emotion, the region where a Hesiod sung, a Pindar soared, and a Plato taught. I cannot forbear citing on this occasion the opinion of an able judge in matters of this nature.

After observing that, “ the world is divided between two sorts of people, the men of wit,

“ and the men of business,” he adds, “ That
“ however mighty the latter may esteem them-
“ selves, they have much the *less* share in the
“ government of mankind; and till they can
“ keep the others out of company, as well as
“ employment, they will have an irresistible
“ dominion over us; for their imagination is
“ so very quick and lively, that in all they
“ enjoy or possess they have a relish highly
“ superior to that of slower men; which fine
“ sense of things they can communicate to
“ others in so prevailing a manner, that they
“ give and take away what impressions they
“ please; for while the man of wit speaks,
“ he bestows upon his hearers, by an apt
“ representation of his thoughts, all the hap-
“ piness and pleasure of being such as he is,
“ and quickens our heavier life into joys we
“ should never of ourselves have tasted, so that
“ we are for *our own* sakes his slaves and
“ followers.”

Sir R. Steele's Christian Hero.

If, therefore, Literature be at once the pillar and ornament of a nation, how highly does it concern all well-constituted governments to afford especial protection and encouragement to Men of Letters!—It is but reasonable, that, as

the pursuit of science is attended with so many obstacles, and demands such abstract attention; they who are engaged in it should, so far as possibly can be effected, enjoy immunities and privileges to compensate for the losses they sustain and the difficulties they encounter. Hence, by an unavoidable consequence, it will follow, that he who would rob the learned of their reward, or take from science a *single immunity* that it possesses, is in truth, however spacious the gloss that may be thrown upon the deed, nothing else than a *Friend to Barbarity*, and a *Foe to Freedom*.

D.

No. 46.

Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus.

Interpres.

HOR.

Nor must you be so faithful an interpreter, as to take the trouble of rendering word for word.

THERE is perhaps no literary name so little revered by the generality of readers as the professed imitator. To him who can write a copy of love verses without grammatical inaccuracy, or call the gods and satyrs of the groves to lament the memory of a mistress or a friend, we are willing to grant all the honour which he claims, and allow him, if he does not attempt the summit, to rove undisturbed on the borders of Parnassus. But to the imitator we are seldom willing to ascribe any other merit than a knowledg of his author, and a tolerable acquaintance with english versification. Whatever may be the beauty or magnificence of his productions we rest satisfied with praising the original, and rise from the perusal with ad-

miration of the book, but with little reverence for its writer.

To excel as an imitator, however, requires powers, which, though not equal to those of a Homer or a Milton, are seldom found united in one man, and for which an author must be indebted to the union of great learning and great abilities. To a perfect knowledge of the languages must be added the judgement of a philosopher, and the imagination of a poet; a delicate and acute perception of the beauties of his author; a comprehension of mind able to follow his original into the regions of sublimity, without accompanying him to the heights of bombast and absurdity.

To copy the faults and weaknesses of an author is a task which an imitator can never be required to perform. He should remember that he has not undertaken to present to his readers a Homer or a Virgil in English, but to produce a poem which may live independent of adventitious circumstances. It would be foolish to compare the Iliad of Cowper and of Pope: the object of the former was to execute a poem which an Englishman might read without regretting the original, and that of the other to shew us what Homer is in greek; to please

by fidelity of resemblance rather than by amplification of imagery, or melody of verse.

Among those productions which do honour to the eighteenth century, and to the English language, may be numbered Mickle's translation of the *Lusiad* of Camoens. Of the original I know nothing but that it is inferior to the imitation. As a regular Epic Poem, indeed, the *Lusiad* does not deserve much praise. The absurd mixture of christian and pagan mythology, notwithstanding all the ingenuity of Mickle, cannot be endured; and the nature of the subject is too confined to interest any one but a native of Portugal. These are faults, however, which do not affect the merit of the translator, who has, perhaps, done all that human ability could perform, to render the *Lusiad* interesting to an English reader.

As an example of melody of versification, and delicacy of description, the production of Mickle excels every other poem (but the *Iliad* of Pope) in the English language. The images are frequently sublime, and always appropriate; the language, though sometimes clouded by affectation, is free from any of the glittering tinsel of modern poetry, and the characters especially, that of Gama, are well supported.

- It is not my purpose to examine the *Lusiad* philosophically. The subject is such as leaves little room for such an attempt, and perhaps Mickle has performed all that criticism can do. I shall only make a few trifling remarks, and produce such passages as may, perhaps, induce the reader to desire more. The length of my extracts will be excused, when it is remembered, that the work has been long undeservedly neglected, and that without them my remarks would be perhaps condemned, and the *Lusiad* forgotten.

The opening of the poem will perhaps bear a comparison with that of the *Enead* or the *Iliad*.

Arms, and the heroes who from Lisbon's shore,
Thro' seas where sail was never spread before,
Beyond where Ceylon lifts her spicy breast,
And waves her woods above the wat'ry waste,
With prowess more than human forced their way
To the fair kingdoms of the rising day;
What wars they wag'd, what seas, what dangers past,
What glorious empire crown'd their toils at last,
Vent'rous I sing, on soaring pinions born,
And all my country's wars the song adorn.
What kings, what heroes of my native land,
Thunder'd on Asia's, and on Afric's strand:
Illustrious shades, who levell'd in the dust
The idol temples, and the shrines of lust;

And where, ere while foul demons were rever'd,
To holy faith unnumber'd altars rear'd;
Illustrious names with deathless laurels crown'd,
While time rolls on, in every clime renown'd!

The following description is eminently beautiful—

Now shooting o'er the flood his fervid blaze,
The red brow'd sun withdraws his beamy rays;
Safe in the bay the crew forget their cares,
And peaceful rest their wearied strength repairs.
Calm twilight now his drowsy mantle spreads,
And shade on shade the gloom still deepening sheds.
The moon, full orb'd, forsakes her wat'ry cave,
And lifts her lovely head above the wave;
The snowy splendors of her modest ray
Stream o'er the glistening waves and quivering play;
Around her glittering on the heaven's arch'd brow,
Unnumber'd stars, enclos'd in azure, glow,
Thick as the dew-drops of the rosy dawn,
Or May flowers crowding o'er the daisy lawn;
The canvas whitens in the silvery beam,
And with a paler red the pendants gleam,
The mast's tall shadows tremble o'er the deep,
The peaceful winds an holy silence keep,
The watchmen's carol, echoed from the prows,
Alone, at times, awakes the still repose.

Mickle has remarked the resemblance of this description to that of Homer in the 8th

Iliad. The beginning of the 7th book of the *Enead*, may likewise be referred to.

The description of *Venus* in the second book, is an admirable one, but surely nothing but the blindest admiration could induce any one to believe that it was only an allegorical description of celestial love. It is impossible that any poet, however deluded by the superstition of his age, could intend the following for a representation of the most solemn attributes of divinity.

The beauteous Queen to heaven now darts her way,
In vain the weeping nymphs implore her stay;
Behind her now the morning star she leaves,
And the sixth heaven her beauteous form receives;
Her radiant eyes such living splendors cast,
The sparkling stars were brighten'd as she past:
The frozen pole with sudden streamlets flow'd,
And like the burning zone with fervor glow'd,
And now confest before the throne of love,
In all her charms appear'd the Queen of Love:
Flush'd by the ardor of her rapid flight
Thro' fields of ether and the realms of light,
Bright as the blushes of the roseate morn
New blooming tints her roseate cheeks adorn,
And all that pride of beauteous grace she wore,
As when in *Ida's* bower she stood of yore;

When every charm, and every hope of joy
Enraptur'd and allur'd the Trojan boy :
Adown her neck more white than virgin snow,
Of softest hue the golden tresses flow,
Her heaving breasts, of purer, softer white
Than snow hills glistening in the moon's pale light,
Except where cover'd by the sash, were bare,
And love unseen, smil'd soft and panted there ;
Nor less the zone the god's fond zeal employs,
The zone awakes the flame of secret joys ;
As ivy tendrils round her limbs divine
Their spreading arms the young Desires entwine ;
Below her waist, and quivering on the gale,
Of thinnest texture flows the silken veil,
And where the lucid curtain dimly shews,
With doubled fires the roving fancy glows ;
The hand of Modesty the foldings threw,
Nor all conceal'd, nor all was given to view ;
Yet her deep grief her lovely face betrays,
Tho' on her cheek the soft smile fault'ring plays ;
All heaven was mov'd.

The following passage may vie with any description in any poet :

I spoke, when rising thro' the darken'd air,
Appall'd we saw an hideous phantom glare ;
High and enormous o'er the flood he tower'd,
And thwart our way with sullen aspect lower'd :
An earthy paleness o'er his cheeks was spread,
Erect uprose his hairs of wither'd red ;

Writhing to speak, his sable lips disclose,
 Sharp, and disjoin'd, his gnashing teeth's blue rows ;
 His haggard beard flow'd quivering on the wind,
 Revenge and horror in his mien combin'd ;
 His clouded front by withering light'nings scar'd,
 The inward anguish of his soul declar'd ;
 His red eyes glowing from their dusky caves,
 Shot livid fires: Far echoing o'er the waves .
 His voice rebounded, as the cavern'd shore
 With hollow groan repeats the tempest's roar ;
 Cold gliding horrors thrill'd each hero's breast,
 Our bristling hairs and tottering knees confess
 Wild dread, the while with visage ghastly wan,
 His black lips trembling, thus the fiend begun

.....
 He spoke, and deep a lengthen'd sigh he drew
 A doleful sound, and vanish'd from the view ;
 The frighten'd billows gave a rolling swell,
 And distant far prolong'd the dismal yell ;
 Faint, and more faint the howling echoes die,
 And the black cloud dispersing leaves the sky.

The following simile is Hometical, but
 much superior to a similar one in the 10th
 Iliad.—

So when the chace excites the rustic throng,
 Rous'd to fierce madness by their mingled cries,
 On the wide bull the red eyed mastiff flies :
 The stern brow'd tyrant trusts his potent horns,
 Around and round the nimble mastiff turns ;

Now by the neck, now by the gory sides
He hangs, and all his bellowing rage derides;
In vain his eye balls burn with living fire,
In vain his nostrils clouds of smoke respire,
His gorge torn out, down falls the furious prize
With hollow thundering sound, and raging dies.
Thus on the moors, &c.

The description of the Island of Love in the ninth book is undoubtedly superior, in delicacy and elegance, to any which the ancient poets can produce.

And now led smoothly o'er the furrow'd tide,
Right to the Isle of Joy the vessels glide.

.....
With graceful pride three hills of softest green,
Rear their fair bosoms o'er the sylvan scene,
Their sides embroider'd boast the rich array
Of flowery shrubs in all the pride of May;
The purple lotos and the snowy thorn,
And yellow pod flowers every slope adorn;
From the green summits of the leafy hills
Descend with murmuring lapse three limpid rills,
Beneath the rose trees loitering slow they glide,
Now tumbles o'er some rock their chrystal pride;
Sonorous now they roll adown the glade,
Now plaintive tinkle in the secret shade;
Now from the darkling grove, beneath the beam
Of ruddy morn, like melted silver stream,

Edging the painted margins of the bowers,
 And breathing liquid freshness on the flowers,
 Where bright reflected in the pool below
 The vermil apples tremble on the bough.

.....
 Now from the flood the graceful bows retire,
 With coy reserve, and now again admire
 Their various liveries by the summer drest,
 Smooth gloss'd, and soften'd in the mirror's breast.
 So by her glass the wishful virgin stays,
 And oft retiring steals the lingering gaze, &c. &c.

.....
 Wide o'er the beauteous isle the lovely fair
 Stray thro' the distant glades, devoid of care;
 From lowly valley, and from mountain grove,
 The lovely nymphs renew the strains of love:
 Here, from the bowers that crown the plaintive rill,
 The solemn harp's melodious warblings thrill;
 Here from the shadows of the upland grot,
 The mellow lute renews the swelling note;
 As fair Diana, and her virgin train,
 Some gaily ramble o'er the flowery plain
 In feign'd pursuit of hare or bounding roe,
 Their graceful mien and beauteous limbs to shew;
 Now seeming careless, fearful now, and coy;
 So taught the goddess of unutter'd joy,
 And gliding thro' the distant glades display
 Each limb, each movement, naked as the day:
 Some light with glee in careless freedom take
 Their playful revels in the chrystal lake;
 One trembling stands no deeper than the knee,
 To plunge reluctant, while in sportful glee

Another o'er her sudden laves the tide ;
In pearly drops the wishful waters glide,
Reluctant dropping from her breasts off snow;
Beneath the wave another seems to glow ;
The amorous waves her bosom fondly kiss'd,
And rose and fell, as panting, on her breast ;
Another swims along with graceful pride,
Her silver arms the glistening waves divide,
Her shining sides the fondling waters lave,
Her glowing cheeks are brighten'd by the wave,
Her hair, of mildest yellow, flows from side
To side, as o'er it plays the wanton tide.

.....
Where some bold Lusians sought the woodland prey,
And thro' the thickets forc'd the pathless way ;
Where some in shades impervious to the beam
Supinely listen'd to the murmuring stream ;
Bright sudden thro' the boughs, the various dyes,
Of pink, of scarlet, and of azure rise.
Swift from the verdant bank the loiterers spring,
Down drops the arrow from the half drawn string ;
Soon they behold 'twas not the roses' hue,
The jonquils yellow, or the pansies blue,
Dazzling the shades ; the nymphs appear—the zone
And flowing scarf in gold and azure shone.
Naked as Venus stood in Ida's bower,
Some trust the dazzling charms of native power,
Thro' the green boughs and darkling shades they
shew
The shining lustre of their native snow.

As visions cloath'd in dazzling white they rise,
Then steal unnoted from the flurried eyes ;
Again apparent, and again withdrawn,
They shine and wanton o'er the smiling lawn.

.....
Swift at the word the gallant Lusians bound,
Their rapid footsteps scarcely touch the ground ;
Fleet thro' the winding shades in rapid flight,
The nymphs as wing'd with terror fly their sight ;
Fleet though they fled, the mild reverted eye
And dimpling smile their seeming fear deny ;
Fleet thro' the shades in parted rout they glide :
If winding path the chosen pairs divide,
Another path by sweet mistake betrays
And throws the lover on the lover's gaze :
If dark brow'd bower conceal the lovely fair,
The laugh, the shriek, confess the charmer there.
Luxurious here the wanton zephyrs toy,
And every fondling favoring art employ.
Fleet as the fair ones speed, the busy gale
In wanton frolic lifts the trembling veil,
Quick fluttering on the gale the robe conceals,
Then instant to the glance each charm reveals, &c. &c.

It cannot be asserted, however, that the work, considered as an English poem, and independent of its general structure, is entirely faultless. The verse has sometimes the appearance of labour, and the epithets are not always happy or

appropriate. He is generally unskilful in the selection of compound adjectives. Such expressions as the following, frequently occur:

Encreasing on the view,
Rose Mauritania's hills of *paly* hue.
The *stilly* lake.

The *mist-wet* sail,
Long lost, long hopeless, on the *storm-torn* wave.

There is likewise a jingle of the words, sometimes designed, and sometimes accidental, which, tho' it seems to be a favourite artifice of our modern writers, it is not easy to endure.

When lo! resplendent in the heaven serene,
High o'er the *Prince* the sacred cross was seen,
The *godlike Prince* with faiths warm glow inflam'd, &c.

So *white, so pure*, the holy spirit spread,
The *dove* like *pictur'd* wings so *pure, so white*.

Where their bright blaze the royal ensigns pour'd,
High o'er the rest the great Alonzo tower'd,
High o'er the rest was his bold front admir'd.

The *fairest princely dames* invok'd his love,
No *princely dame* his constant faith could move.

This kind of repetition, of which Mickle appears to be fond, may indeed be defended

by the authority of Addison and some other writers. But even the name of Addison cannot justify absurdity. To repeat the noun, or the epithet where the pronoun cannot be used with propriety, may sometimes be allowed, but no one can defend the licence as a beauty, or use it systematically without injury to the *effect* of his productions. The following instances are equally unpleasing, though perhaps accidental ones.

The restless ocean roar'd,
Where *bounding* surges never keel explor'd
If *bounding* shore, &c.

And now descending in a *spacious* bay,
Wide o'er the coast the vent'rous soldiers stray,
To spy the wonders of the *spacious* shore.

Great are the dangers great the toils he cried,
Ere *glorious* honours crown the victor's pride,
If in the *glorious* strife the hero fall
He proves.

Vulgarisms and quibbles sometimes occur.—

Keen o'er the field the thundering hero flies.

Athwart the gloom.

What he beheld *I know not, but I know,*

Big swell'd my bosom,

And to such *honour, honour'd* peace restor'd.

These faults, however, are comparativey trifling and do not affect the general merits of the poem. To recommend it to the attention of my readers, after the extracts I have given, is surely unnecessary. If by my remarks I have in *any* degree contributed to extend the fame of a writer who has been so long, and so undeservedly neglected, I shall not consider them as entirely useless. I am sorry, indeed, that a more public and more interesting tribute of respect has not been shewn to a poet who has adorned the language of his country, and who bade

The strong poetic tide

Roll o'er, Britannia's shores in Lusitanian pride.

Pursuits of Literature.

No. 47.

Nec sic incipies, ut scriptor cyclicus.

HER.

You should not begin like a ballad singer.

THERE has arisen within these few years a class of writers, who have distinguished themselves by the title of SIMPLE POETS; who in their attempts to support their pretensions have purposely violated those laws which custom and nature have laid down as essential to the excellence of tender or elegant composition, and have disgraced the English language and the name of poetry, by absurd and unsuccessful endeavours at SIMPLICITY.

The greatest number of these writers seem to imagine that to be vulgar is to be simple. Provided they violate the established laws of English versification, and neglect such words as are used

by former poets, or in polished society, they rest satisfied with the merit of their productions; and affect to look down with ineffable contempt on that laborious race who have owed their fame to elegance or propriety. In the opinion of their admirers (for their admirers are necessarily numerous) whatever possesses the appearance of art or harmony is too polished, and too glittering for the language of real passion, and nothing more seems required to gain their favor, than a designed ruggedness of verse, and a copious use of such words and sentences as “ Ah! Alas !” “ Sooth to say !” “ Ah well a-day !” “ Stop traveller” and “ the sweet one wept.”

Their epithets and similies are borrowed from such circumstances as are used the most frequently in common life, and are calculated to destroy all associations of elegance or dignity : it is not sufficient that the face of a beauty should be shaded from the sun, it is absolutely necessary, to please the ladies of high life, that she should be *parasol'd*, and *umbrella'd*; and in order to gratify the feelings of the footman and the dairy-maid, her eyes must be *watered* with tears, and her breath must be more sweet than that of the *tender* cow ; or the still more delicious perfume of the *milk-pail*.

Elegance of language, or propriety of sentiment, are not inconsistent with simplicity. It is as easy to describe the simple feelings of the heart by smoothness of numbers, and elegance of diction, as by the most laboured ruggedness of verse, and the most artificial vulgarity of sentiment. To express the emotions even of common minds by meanness and harshness of language, is a task which has no connection whatever with the design of poetry, or of any class of composition. The end of poetry is to please, and the same reasons which induce an author to put his vulgarity into verse, should have compelled him to embellish his verse by harmony and elegance. If the poetry of our modern poets be meant for the entertainment of the vulgar it is too refined; if for the perusal of the learned, it is too mean, and too laboured. An accurate copy of nature, if such a plea were allowed, should have incited them to give us the amorous dialogues of shepherds and shepherdesses in their own *forcible* and *natural* prose. If Mr. Lloyd, or any of his disciples, imagined that a *violation* of nature was necessary, he might as well have extended the liberty a little farther, and have rendered his poems consistent with themselves, instead of disgusting us with

a confused mixture of meanness and elegance. It is of no avail to assert that the common people do amuse themselves with songs and ditties, for if the assertion be true, it only makes us pity the labour of our industrious ANTHOLOGISTS, and lament that instead of improving these ballads, they had presented us with a few of the originals.

But Mr. Wordsworth * and his predecessors have defended their productions by informing us that they *have copied in verse* the language of nature and of common life; it may be useful, therefore, to ask how far, according to their own principles, their efforts have succeeded. It appears that nature is accurately copied by employing abstract ideas in the place of simple ones, by using epithets or similes taken from such objects as are not familiar to the beings they describe, or such as are only remembered with disgust; and by the history of devils who have appeared in human shape; have carried dead bodies from their graves, and have snatched

* This gentleman, however, has come nearer the point at which he has aimed than any of his contemporaries, and is undoubtedly a man of genius, and a poet.

travellers from the earth, and conveyed them through rivers, and marshes through bogs and quagmires, over hedges and steeples, till at last they have sunk into the ground, and disappeared from the view, “ amidst the noise and roarings of witches and of ghosts !”

But, perhaps, it may be answered, that the middle species of simple poetry is adapted to the occurrences of common life, and the higher kind of it to the more sublime objects of the imagination ; without examining the propriety therefore of professed meanness in any endeavour at sublimity, I shall produce, for the gratification of my readers, a few specimens of pathos and magnificence.

NATURAL.

Richard Penlake was a cheerful man,
Chearful, and frank, and free,
But he lead a sad life with Rebecca his wife,
For a terrible shrew was she.

Richard Penlake a scolding would take,
Till patience availed no longer,
Then Richard Pinlake his crabstick would take,
And shew her that he was the stronger.

I knew an Irishman ; to England he
Came every spring a hay making ; and much

Would praise his cabin. By a bog it stood
 And he had store of peats. Without a chimney
 Stood the little cabin. Full of warmth and smoke
 It cherish'd its owner. The smoke he lov'd,
 Lov'd for the warmth sake, *tho' it blear'd his eyes.*
 Now when the north-east pinches I bethink me
 Of this poor Irishman; and think how sweet
 It were to house with him, and pat his cur,
And peel potatoes' mid his cabin's smoke.

SUBLIME.

What woud'st thou with me, the third time he
 cries,
 And a flash of lightning came from his eyes,
 And he lifted his griffin claw in the air,
 And the young man had not strength for a prayer!
 His eyes with a furious joy were possess'd,
 And he tore the young man's heart from his breast;
 He grin'd a horrible grin at his prey,
 And in a clap of thunder vanish'd away;
 Henceforth let all young men take heed,
 How in a conjuror's book they read!

Perhaps too it may be proper to present the
 reader with an example of

SIMPLICITY.

T'was a noble ox
 That smok'd before us, and the old October
 Went merrily in overflowing cans;

But 'twas a *skin deep* merriment. My heart
Seem'd as it took no share. And when we drink
His health, the thought came over me, and *spoilt the*
draught.

Poor gentleman! To think ten months ago
He came of age——and now!

Poor young man! I lov'd him
Like my own child.

Come Candlemas, and I have been their servant
For five and forty years.

If this be *meant* for wit, or irony, or burlesque, it is too serious, and is totally incongruous with the beginning of the poem.

Such expressions as these might be allowed in a drama where the character is necessary to assist the plot, or to enliven the scene, but to introduce such sentiments, and such language in a poem which contains nothing else and is professedly designed for the closet, may be very agreeable and convenient for the author, but is certainly disgusting and tiresome to the reader.

If it be urged that Mr. Southey, in his tales, has adapted his language and his verse

to the subjects he has chosen, I have no inclination to contradict the assertion, and can only regret, that a writer of acknowledged talents should employ his pen on such unnatural and disgusting fictions.

It cannot be denied, that notwithstanding all their singularities, the writers of this class have sometimes produced poems and passages which may be read with pleasure; but these are only occasional instances of the triumph of genius over absurdity. If even under all the disadvantages of a perverted taste, they have sometimes succeeded in pleasing or astonishing the reader, how much more excellent might their productions have been, if they had formed and improved them by the acknowledged and immutable laws of English poetry. The diamond, amidst all its dross, may sparkle in the sun, but it can never attain the value or the splendor of the polished gem. He who has it in his power to do much, and wastes his life in indulging the caprices of a perverted and licentious imagination, will be more despised and neglected when adventitious circumstances have lost their influence, than he who with moderate abilities arrives at ex-

cellence by a judicious cultivation of his powers, and by an adherence to those rules which the genius of his language, and the laws of criticism and of nature have established.

That I may exhibit the poetry of these gentlemen to the best advantage, I have contrasted them with some of the best ditties I have been able to procure from the most celebrated ballad-singers of London, and will leave the reader to determine their respective excellence.

TERRIFIC.

Annual Anthology, vol. ii. p. 262.

He laid him down, and clos'd his eyes,
But soon a scream made him arise,
He started, and saw two eyes of flame,
On his pillow from whence the screaming came!

THE GOSPORT TRAGEDY, *Or the Innocent Damsel betrayed.*

Thus spoke she to him with screeches and cries,
The flashes of light'ning did start from her eyes,
Which put the ships crew in a terrible fear,
None saw the ghost, but the voice they did hear!

THE PATHETIC.

Annual Anthology, vol. ii. p. 109.

I have no tail to strike and slay,
 And I have ears to hear what you say,
 I have teeth moreover as you may see,
 And I will make a meal of thee!

The BLOODY GARDENER'S CRUELTY,
Or the Shepherd's Daughter Betrayed.

What business have you here madam, pray!
 Are you come to rob the garden gay.
 Cries she no thief I am,
 But wait for that young man,
 Who did this night appoint to meet me here:
 He spoke no more, but straight a knife he took;
 And pierc'd her heart before one word she spoke!

THE SIMPLE, or DESCRIPTIVE.

Annual Anthology, v. ii. p. 72.

She was so pale, and meagre eyed,
 As scarcely to be known,
 When to her mother she returned
 From service in the town.

THE BLOODY GARDENER.

Now mind this sad relation, which I do give you here,
 'Tis of a maiden fair,
 A shepherd's daughter dear,
 But love did prove her utter overthrow.

SENTIMENTAL.

Anthology, vol. ii. p. 73.

There from morn till night she sits,
 Now god forgive her sin!

For heavy is her crime, and strange
Her punishment hath been.

From "A Full and True Account of the
Bloody Murder of Anne Jefferys."

And now all night at the fire he sits,
And says now my true lover's come,
So lord have mercy on this bad man's wits,
And forgive him the sins he has done!

As many of the gentle readers of the Anthology may be unwilling to wait till the end of every year for their usual entertainment, they will no doubt thank me for informing them, that the valuable originals I have quoted, may be had of J. Evans, 79, Long Lane, West Smithfield. Where may likewise be had every celebrated ballad, the Yorkshire Tragedy, the Cruel Murder of Betty Tomkins, and a full and true account how a Man was killed by the Lancashire Witches, and how he was wonderfully preserved, &c. &c.

No. 48.

*Parcus deorum cultor et infrequens,
 Insanientis, dum sapientiæ,
 Consultos erro.*

HOR.

A fugitive from heaven and prayer,
 I mock'd at all religious fear,
 Deep scienc'd in the mazy lore
 Of mad philosophy.

DONKIN.

ALTHOUGH it is seldom expected, or desired, that a periodical paper, should be devoted to the consideration of serious or religious subjects, yet I may, perhaps, be *for once* excused for dedicating a small portion of the Saunterer to question more important than has generally occupied its pages, and of too solemn and too urgent a nature to be neglected, through any apprehension of tiring the idle or the vicious.

The present age has been so peculiarly distinguished for infidelity, and so many of our

best writers have employed their pens in subverting those doctrines which mankind are accustomed to reverence, that it may be of some importance to enquire how far such real or affected zeal for the propagation of scepticism can be justified, and, whether the publication of new opinions, if even they be true, can be defended by the laws of wisdom or of virtue.

Truth should, undoubtedly, be the object of every man who has improved his mind by reading or reflection; and he who remains in ignorance, or uncertainty, for want of resolution to resist the allurements of sloth or interest, is, perhaps, of all human beings the most contemptible; but, when our own minds have been satisfied by our enquiries, we ought not only to consider the intrinsic value of the opinions we have embraced, but the effects which they may probably have upon society; and if after a conscientious deliberation, we find that their influence would be rather injurious than beneficial, or, that with a very distant and uncertain prospect of future good, their present operation would be such as to diffuse discontent, disgust, and profligacy among mankind, we should confine them to our own bosoms, and instead of re-

greeting the ignorance of our fellow-creatures, should rather be pleased with the reception of those doctrines which have contributed so much to their virtue and felicity.

As my limits will not permit me to pursue this reasoning to its utmost extent, I shall confine it, at present, to the subject of the **CHRISTIAN RELIGION**, and shall endeavour to prove that, independent of those more solemn motives for belief, which influence the minds of the greatest number of mankind, a regard to moral principle alone should deter us from any attack upon its authority and its doctrines.

Whatever may be the conviction which a man may have of the certainty of his peculiar opinions, yet the acknowledged weakness of the human understanding, and the improbability that he alone should be favoured by the discovery of truth, while the rest of the world is shackled by prejudice and absurdity, should incite him, if he possesses a common degree of modesty or prudence, to hesitate a little before he hazards his own peace of mind, and the happiness of millions, by the publication of sentiments which he himself believes to be true, but which may, with great proba-

bility be false. Whatever evidence occurs to him from the nature of his enquiries, or the peculiarity of his situation, should be allowed to have its due influence on his mind, but he ought not to forget that there are others, who, with equal opportunities of information, and with equal freedom from hereditary prejudices, have persisted in the doctrines which he imagines to be fallacious and contemptible.

These instances, although they ought not *in themselves* to alter his opinions, should induce him to reflect that they can only claim the merit of probability; of a probability which can only be weighed against another, at the expence of the peace, the virtue, and the happiness of mankind.

But if his opinions be such as can be proved by mathematical demonstration, and which therefore no one who examines them can hesitate to believe, yet if they are such as have a probable tendency to injure the virtue and felicity of mankind, every principle of reason and morality should induce him to conceal them. That the world is happy in proportion to its virtue, is a position which no one has ever ventured to deny, he therefore who diminishes

its happiness by destroying the foundations of religion, and consequently of virtue, cannot be considered as the friend, but as the enemy of his fellow creatures; he should be regarded as a foe to all those principles which secure us against the dangers and the miseries of life, and though neither justice nor prudence may require that he should be punished, he cannot be considered as entitled either to praise or reverence.

But this certainty of belief is rather possible than probable. He who addicts himself to consider every thing as false, unless it can be proved by abstract meditation, notwithstanding all the pride of scepticism, must be at last contented with resting his own opinions on the same *philosophical* * foundation with the doctrines he has rejected, and must rather espouse such sentiments as are not contradicted by reason, than such as can be mathematically demonstrated: They will therefore have sufficient strength to influence the minds of the sanguine and the credulous, without commanding that

* I say upon the same philosophical foundations because Revelation makes a distinction between the Doctrines of the Christian Religion and the opinions of philosophy, which should not be forgotten.

conviction which may silence opposition. The consequences will be such as have always proceeded from religious innovation. Mankind will be led to reject their present system of belief without any inclination to embrace another. The progress of scepticism will release the ignorant and the licentious from every moral and religious obligation; the people liberated from those restraints which have formerly preserved them in the paths of happiness and virtue, will deviate without terror or remorse into the gulph of profligacy and wickedness, and the corruption of principles and manners will proceed with accelerating rapidity, till the yoke of a foreign power, or the superior genius of a bold and designing adventurer, at once imposes upon the nation a system of religion, and an oppressive and arbitrary constitution.

This reasoning, however, will not apply with its utmost force where the system of religion is such as to produce vice and misery, rather than happiness and virtue; although even in this case a writer or a philosopher should be careful that the evils he complains of are not imaginary, and that the publication of his opinions may not increase, rather

than diminish the general infelicity. But to the Christian Religion, the argument is directly applicable; of *its* influence in correcting the violence of passion, in exciting not only the milder, but the more active virtues, and in promoting the felicity of human life, no one, whatever may have been his scepticism with regard to its divine authority, has ever ventured to doubt.* To attempt, therefore, by any kind of reasoning, or by any system of philosophy, to subvert a religion, which, (independent of more solemn considerations) has preserved mankind from many of those vices which disgraced the heathen world, and which tends in so great a degree to secure the happiness of its followers, is an imprudence of which no wise or good man (unless his prejudices have perverted his reason) will easily be guilty.

If Christianity were deprived of those distinguishing characteristics which first conducted to its establishment; the Divinity of its Author, and the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, it would no longer have any influence upon the actions of mankind, but

* I do not except Mr. Hollis, whose attack was rather directed against the particular Doctrines, than the general Spirit of Christianity.

would decline, like the systems of the heathens, into a lax, and doubtful system of Ethics, which might amuse philosophers, but would have little power to restrain vice or to promote virtue. The common classes of society have few motives for virtue but such as affect their passions or their feelings. If they doubt that Christ was the Son of God, they will likewise doubt the truth of the doctrines that he taught; and as they begin to lose the certainty of future reward for the good actions which they perform in this life, they will relapse into the natural licentiousness and wickedness of men who have no other motive for their actions than the gratification of the present hour.

If therefore the Christian Religion promotes the general happiness, and virtue of mankind, if its principles cannot be retained without its doctrines, and if a contrary system while it is liable to error, would only produce misery and confusion in the world, without any certain prospect of ultimate advantage, it is surely the duty of the philosopher and the moralist to retain their own opinions, if they differ from those which are generally adopted, without recommending them to others, and to rest satisfied with the present condition of society, with-

out disturbing the world by fanciful objections which may be productive of much discord and unhappiness, without promoting the interests of truth, or virtue.

I am not ignorant how much this kind of reasoning will be censured as tending to the overthrow of all rational discussion and enquiry. My arguments, however, extend only to those topics which affect the virtue and felicity of mankind. To express our opinions on subjects of general literature, or philosophical science, is a liberty which only a bigot or a tyrant would desire to repress; but to destroy the peace and felicity of the world, and to hazard the production of misery, discord, and wickedness, for the gratification of vanity or curiosity, is a crime for which no acuteness or learning can compensate, and which can scarcely be expiated even by literary repentance.

No. 49.

*Unus et alter,
Assuitur pinnus.*

HOR.

A thing of threads and patches.

SHAKESPEARE.

I Originally intended to affix the following remarks, as notes to the places to which they respectively refer, but as this would have interrupted the reader's attention, or disfigured the book, I have thought it best to collect them into a number, without regard to time or order.

Since the remarks upon Betty were written, he appears to have lost much of his popularity. I do not know, however, whether this is not rather a disgrace to the public than to him. After temporary curiosity and wonder have subsided, we are too apt to run into the contrary extreme, and despise what is really admi-

rable, in proportion to our former enthusiasm. To perform the most difficult characters at fourteen, without any violation of nature or propriety, is the utmost which human genius could have been expected to accomplish. But Betty advanced beyond negative excellence, and instead of being merely endured, was able to delight and to affect many thousands of spectators. To say that his performances were not faulty, or that they were not equal to those of Kemble or of Cook, if it were in every respect true, would detract little from his merit. To have performed what no other boy, with the same advantages has done, is sufficient praise, without expecting that he should possess the limbs or the voice of a veteran performer. The objections which the London newspapers have made to his action, apply rather to the general absurdity of a boy appearing upon the stage, than to Betty's performance in particular, and perhaps even their general reasoning has little force. The accounts of his failure in voice, &c. are very much exaggerated, and if even they were true, they do not affect my criticisms. I described what his performance *was*, and not what it is, or may be. When I first published my remarks they were considered as too severe,

rather than too favourable; but such is the change of popular opinion, that my praises are now considered as excessive.

The following criticisms on Voltaire, may shew that I am not so singular in my opinion of him as is imagined. They are the more pleasing to me, as I had not seen them when my observations were first published.

“ Otons à un historien la connoissance des passions, sa politique sera dès lors aussi incertaine et chancelante que celle de certains hommes d’etat qui se laissent ballotter par la fortune. Dans un chapitre, il sera Machiaveliste; dans l’autre, il louera la bonne foi. Partizan zélé du luxe, il se moquera des gouvernemens qui font des lois somptuaires; et ailleurs, il vous dira que les Suisses ignoient les sciences, et les arts que le luxe a fait naître, mais qu’il étoient sages et heureux. Les maximes raisonnables qui lui échappent quelque fois ne servent qu’ à prouver qu’il a peu de sens; on ne trouvera dans un ouvrage que des demi-verités qui seront autant d’erreurs, parce qu’il leur aura donné trop ou trop peu d’étendue. Rien ne sera présente dans ses justes proportions, ni peint avec des couleurs véritables.

Telle est, pour vous le dire en passant l'histoire universelle de Voltaire. J'etois tres dispose a lui pardonner mauvaise politique, sa mauvaise morale, son ignorance, et la hardiesse avec laquelle, il tronque desfigure, et altere la plupart des faits ; mais J'aurois au moins voulez trouver dans l'historien un poete qui eut assez de sens pour ne pas faire grimacer ses personnages, &c. &c."

Mably Maniere d'ecrire l'Histoire.

- His censure of the History of Charles XII. is still more severe, but too long to be quoted.

" Un des hommes qui avoit le plus d'esprit et de jugement Fontenelle a été accuse de manquer de gout et de genie. Un autre Voltaire, a infiniment d'esprit et de gout, mais quelques-uns lui refusant le genie, et plusieurs le jugement.

" Voltaire a ecrit sur la poesie avec plus d'agrement et de gout que de solidite et de profondeur ; plus en poete qu'en homme d'esprit. Tranchors le mot. Il en a ecrit trop superficiellement.

“ On a ose dire de la Henriade, et on l'a dit sans malignite. Je ne sais pourquoi Je baille en la lisant.” “ Je ne sais pas comment la Henriade avec une poesie et une versification si parfaites, a pu reussir a m'ennuyer.”

The following are the words of a British author, whose work has been published since my first edition. Notwithstanding the little merit of his work, as an example of original criticism, or of elegant composition, his opinion of Voltaire deserves some regard, as his prejudices appear to be rather in his favor than against him,

“ Voltaire is a *singular genius in history*. He has dressed her out like a gay, modish, modern *personage*, but has stripped her of all the dignity and gravity which have been generally considered as *part of her character*. She is *all charms*, and pleasantry, and avoids even the appearance of study and reflection. He has given her the air of romance more than any other author. His narrative is lively, picturesque, and witty, while his reflections *favour* more of the man of pleasure than of the serious historian While there are so many causes of suspicion against him, he condescends not to support his narrative by

a single credential. *The consequence natural to such conduct*, and the credibility of his information, has, I believe, incurred suspicion all over Europe. It has taken such firm hold of the minds of men, that it has not been removed by the authority of a writer on whose judgement and integrity the public is much disposed to rely. The readers of Dr. Robertson seem to have considered his testimony, in favor of the industry and veracity of Voltaire, rather as a compliment to French literature, than as founded exactly in truth. There is scarcely a species of reputable composition in which he has not attempted to appear, and he has been so successful in them all as to gain general applause. This effect, however, has, I suspect resulted from circumstances, rather than from the real merit of his works, &c. &c.

Lectures on Belle Lettres, and Logic,
By William Barron, F. R. S.
Professor of Belles Lettres and
Logic, in the University of
St. Andrews, 1806.

Much indulgence is due to a posthumous publication, when the officiousness of friends has offered it to the world without any re-

gard to the intention of its author; but Mr. Barron's work appears to have been revised for publication previous to his death, and criticism may therefore be allowed to express its opinion, without being accused of harshness or injustice. Upon the matter of the work there will be so many opinions, that I shall only refer the reader to Vol. I. p. 45, where Mr. Barron informs us, with much formality, that the arrangement of the Latin language is very different from that of our own, and produces many appropriate examples to confirm his assertion. This might do very well as a preparatory lecture at St. Andrews, but it is rather too trivial to be presented to the public in its present form. A writer who professes to trifle, may be allowed to do so, but something important is justly expected from two thick octavo volumes of a work which is intended to be systematical; and which is sanctioned by the name of a Professor of Belles Lettres and Logic, in a respectable university. Those parts which are executed with the greatest judgement, are rendered uninteresting by the space of time which has elapsed since they were first written. We are informed what was the state of criticism and refinement twenty or thirty years ago, rather than what it is at present,

and chapters which unite justness and novelty of remark, are rendered disgusting by the peculiarities of diction and phraseology which continually recur. Such expressions as, “the most flattering distinction *competent* to human nature;” “the most *patent* path,” “with *abundance* of nature,” “If the events *were* ever so great, yet if they *are* not connected.” “I shall make particular application when, &c.” “as *an useful* author.” “a great share of the *faculty of imagination*,” “It (didactic poetry) sometimes adds the most *sagacious reflections, pleasant speculations*, &c. and Addison was fond of the reputation of a poet, though he enjoyed not the *best powers* for acquiring it,” occur in every page. In the criticism I have quoted, I have put the most disagreeable phrases in Italics.

In No. 11. I did not mean to treat with disrespect the Clergy of the Established Church, who as a body of men, are distinguished by talents, learning, and politeness; or to deny the necessity and advantage of classical erudition. But I wished to recommend a greater attention to propriety and elegance of delivery. Some of the Ministers of the Church of England, are as remarkable for their eloquence as their learning,

but too many of them are deficient in elocution ; and their sermons, though recommended by elegance of style and force of argument, leave little impression upon their hearers. We admire the acuteness and the abilities of the preacher, but we laugh at his peculiarities, and forget his precepts.

No. 50

*Valent res ludicra, si me**Palma negata maerum, dona reducit opimum.*

HOR.

Farewell the stage, for humbly I disclaim
Such fond pursuits of pleasure or of fame,
If I must sink in shame, or swell with pride,
As the gay palm is granted or denied.

FRANCIS.

AS I was sitting in my study, a short time ago, and perusing a parcel of reviews, I could not help feeling some terror at the severity of those arbiters of literature, and laid aside their books with a melancholy prospect of being condemned by their decisions to oblivion or ridicule. Men are unwilling, said I, to grant any allowance to the peculiar circumstances under which a work is composed or published. The productions of an Author are generally tried by a standard of excellence to which he himself

had not dared to approach, and the world is willing to judge him, by what it is in the power of human talents and industry to attain, rather than to praise him for what he has really performed.

As I made these reflections, sleep insensibly overpowered me. I saw in imagination a literary review, on the cover of which I observed the title of "the Saunterer." I took it up with some agitation, and read as follows:

"These essays are the productions of a very young man, who appears to be ambitious of literary fame, and in the neighbourhood of Newcastle, he has, perhaps, obtained it. Whether however they will gain the favor of the more fastidious critics of the metropolis, may perhaps be doubted. Such an air of impudence pervades the whole work, and the author's remarks upon literary characters are so very extraordinary, that although we would not be considered as willing to repress the efforts of a juvenile writer, yet we are really compelled to consider his remarks as very impertinent and absurd. We wonder how he could imagine that such a subject as Master Betty could interest the public. His style is spoiled in many places by a negli-

gent repetition of the words: in one sentence he says, "should be varied according to the nature of his subject," and in the next, "on light subjects, &c. should be." And we find the following quibble.—He does not "oppose his opponents."* and this awkward antithesis, "his labour will be useless, and his ingenuity vain†." His remarks upon servants are ridiculous. They are universally known to be proud, insolent, extravagant, and deceitful; yet he has the folly to believe that these accounts are very much exaggerated. Considered as the production of a young man indeed, we are compelled to allow that . . . that, and that . . . I was preparing to commit the criticism to the flames, when a friend, whose candour I loved, and whose abilities I respected, appeared and prevented me.

"Learn, said he, to regard with more equanimity the opinions of friendship or criticism. Affection or ignorance will praise what is mean, and fastidiousness or envy will endure what is excellent. That vague admiration which wonders without reflection, and


* These defects the author had not leisure to remark till the second edition was nearly printed. He conceives that the acknowledgement of them will mitigate the censure.

† This is a transposition of the press, in some copies it is your labour, will be useless and vain, dele vain.

that undistinguishing severity which condemns without discrimination, are equally contemptible, and equally deceitful. To censure your style without noticing its beauties, or to praise it, without remarking its defects; to despise your sentiments as foolish, because they are the sentiments of youth, or to admire them as just, because they are uncommon, is neither the mark of candor nor of wisdom. The opinion of that critic alone ought to be regarded, who can censure without descending to personal abuse, and admire excellence without pardoning absurdity; whose good nature can forgive the negligences of youth, and be satisfied with what is already good, without lamenting that it is not entirely faultless. Even those minor critics who judge of the merit of an author by his bookseller, who love to censure rather than to praise, and delight in miserable puns and personal allusions, you ought not wholly to despise. If you can divest yourself of passion and of prejudice, and consult your own writings with a firm purpose of discovering your errors, and reforming them, you will find that even the attacks of malevolence are not wholly useless. Endeavour to correct your writings, with the pen of a critic, rather than an author. Attain excellence when it is in your

power, and neither yield to the temptations of vanity or idleness. Defy the attacks of criticism, rather than trust to its generosity: and if by your juvenile productions you have neither added much to the literature of your country, nor attained the eminence of a Johnson or an Addison, you may at least be satisfied with the portion of praise you have obtained; and when time has improved your learning and strengthened your judgement, when you enjoy the powers of maturity without the activity of youth, the remembrance of your early exertions may stimulate you to industry, and prevent you from wasting your age in barren knowledge or disgraceful inactivity!"

When struck by whirlwinds on the naked shore,
The tender sapling lifts its head no more;
Its youthful vigor shrinks before the blast,
No sun revives it when the storm is past,
But fann'd by genial gales its trunk extends,
O'er the wide plain its height majestic bends,
To heaven its boughs in lofty grandeur rise,
Its roots o'erspread the vale, its branches touch
the skies !



The reader is desired to correct the following important

ERRATA. *Corrected*

VOLUME I.

Page	3	line	20	for	<i>or</i>	read	<i>to</i> .
—	27	—	5	from	bottom,	for	<i>her</i> read <i>the</i> .
—	62	—	17	for	<i>this</i>	read	<i>has</i> .
—	9	—	12	for	<i>of</i>	read	<i>or</i> .
—	12	—	10	for	<i>cultivate</i>	read	<i>elevate</i> .
—	55	—	2	insert	<i>witty</i>	after	<i>and</i> .
—	65	—	16	after	<i>useless</i>	dele	<i>and vain</i> .
—	66	—	11	after	<i>Hannibal</i>	dele	<i>in</i> .
—	192	—		Motto,	for	<i>omnia</i>	read <i>omnes</i> , and for <i>Juvenal, Persius</i> .

The letter of Emily Hopeful is dated from the day on which it was published.

VOLUME II.

Page	33	line	13	dele	<i>ed</i> .
—	55	—	4	for	<i>pretty</i> read <i>witty</i> .
—	62	—	15	for	<i>literary</i> read <i>literally</i> .
—	86	—		dele	the signature <i>Z</i> .
—	61	—	7	for	<i>power</i> read <i>powers</i> .

It may perhaps be necessary to mention, that the papers signed X. were not written by the same gentleman who is mentioned in the Sketch at the beginning of the first Volume.

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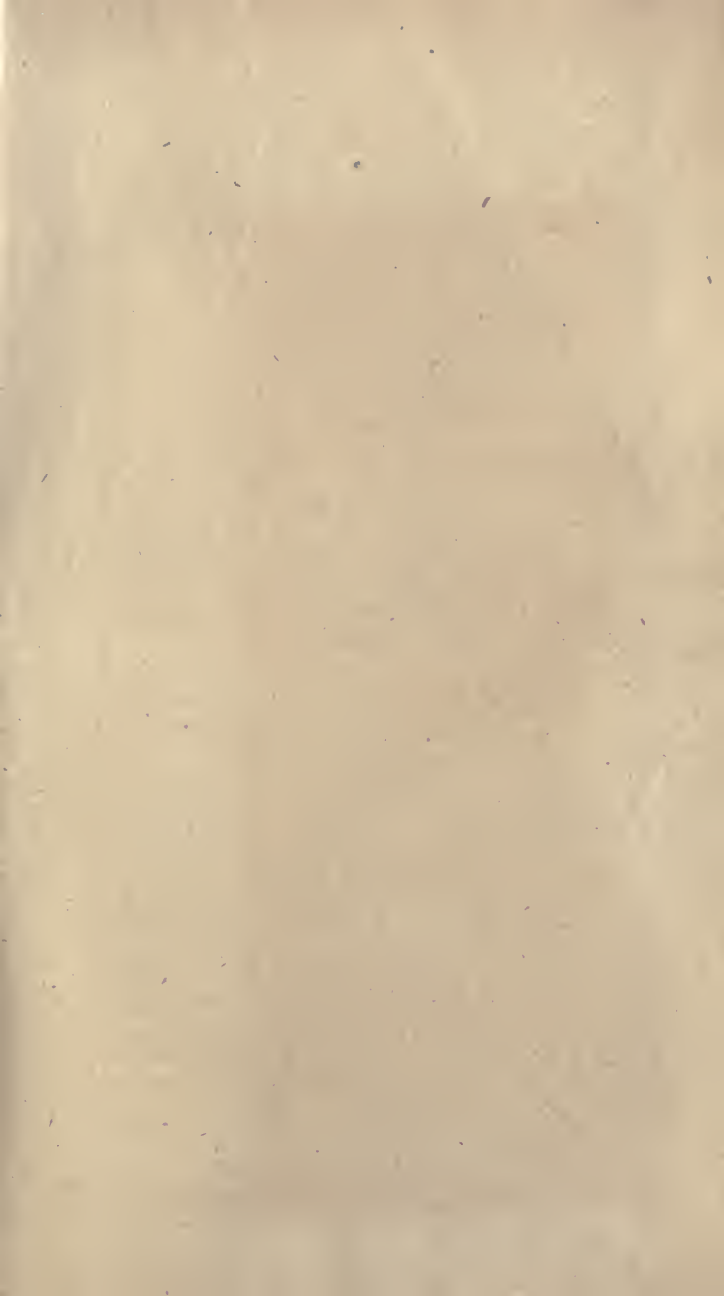
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